The Living Age

Vol. 300
From Beginning

Vol. 13
Eighth Series

CONTENTS

The Turks: A Plea for Justice . . . . . PIERRE LOTI 65
From the FIGARO

National Sovereignty and the League of Nations . . . . . RT. HON. SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK 68
From the FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW

Imperial Preference and World Peace 72
From the NATION

Colonel Gadke Reviews the War 75
From WÜRZBURGER GENERAL-ANZEIGER

The Day 77
From the LONDON CHRONICLE

German Socialists and an International Conference . . . . . PHILIPP SCHEIDEMANN 78
From VORWÄRTS

The Junkers of the Baltic Country 80
From KÖLNISCHE VOLKSZEITUNG

The Raid on the Manor 83
From the NEW STATESMAN

In the Vindictive . . . . . LT. COM. E. HILTON YOUNG 87
From the CORNHILL MAGAZINE

The Test (concluded) . . . . . OSWALD WILDRIDGE 97
From BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE

The Swinburne Letters and Our Debt to the Victorian Era . . . . . ARTHUR WAUGH 102
From the NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER

The Winter's Tale 113
From PUNCH

Auctions . . . . . KATHARINE TYNAN 115
From the NEW WITNESS

The Last Bohemian . . . . . S. HUDDLESTON 117
From the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN

The Irish Theatre 119
From the SPECTATOR

ECONOMICS, TRADE, AND FINANCE

German Sabotage at Lille 121
From the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN

The Outlook in Mexico 123
From the ECONOMIST

Talk of Europe 124
A German Officer at the Armistice Meeting — A Swiss Note on President Wilson — The Author of *J'Accuse* — The Kaiser Again — Mr. Kipling's Inscription.

Editor's Note-Book 127

A PAGE OF VERSE

The Piper . . . . . HILDA SKAE 128
From the BOOKMAN

The March of Man . . . . . G. H. 128
From the SATURDAY REVIEW

Published Every Saturday by

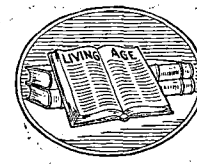
THE LIVING AGE COMPANY

41 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston

$6.00 a Year

15c a Copy

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



THE LIVING AGE

FOR NEXT WEEK WILL CONTAIN

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION *By Sir George Buchanan*

An authoritative article by the last British Ambassador to Russia.

GIBRALTAR AND CEUTA *By General Sir Charles Callwell*

A well-documented study of a most important subject.

FRANCE SALUTES PRESIDENT WILSON *By Henri Lavedan*

FESTIVAL

A vivid and amusing account of a Red Cross Drive in India.

DEGAS *By André Pératé*

A medley of pleasant reminiscences and sound criticism. Translated from the *Mercure de France*.

THE MARSEILLAISE AT MUNSTER

A French prisoner tells how the German revolution came to his prison camp. Translated from the *Figaro*.

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IN CENTRAL EUROPE

An Austrian Socialist note, translated from the *Arbeiter Zeitung*.

THE MOST MISERABLE OF MEN *By Desmond MacCarthy*

A short story with an ironic title.

THE FUTURE OF THE GERMAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRY

If not a subscriber, and you would like to receive the magazine regularly, fill out coupon below.

The Living Age,
41 Mt. Vernon St., Boston, Mass.

Gentlemen: Enclosed find $6.00 for my subscription to THE LIVING AGE for one year, beginning.....

NAME.....

ADDRESS..... CITY.....

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LIVING AGE
Founded by E. LITTELL in 1844
NO. 3888

JANUARY 11, 1919

THE TURKS: A PLEA FOR JUSTICE

BY PIERRE LOTI

[M. Pierre Loti, the illustrious writer, the true friend of Turkey, which has inspired so many of his masterpieces, has given us a new proof of his sympathy for her. We print his article, leaving with him the entire responsibility of the opinions which he expresses.]

Our dear and more than ever beloved France is, I believe, of all countries in the world the one where people live in the most blissful ignorance of what is going on in neighboring countries; Turkey, for instance, although she was our ally for centuries, is as unknown to us as the wilds of Central Africa or of the moon. For instance, have I not seen at Constantinople, where the winter is colder than in Paris, tourists arrive from France in December dressed in linen suits! Have I not read in great Paris newspapers, while my storm-tossed craft was struggling for weeks on end amid snow squalls; 'How lucky M. Pierre Loti is, to be in the Bosphorus, the land of eternal spring!'

The fact is, you see, that Turkey is in the East, and to the average Frenchman the East means a blue sky, sun, palm trees, and camels. And in their amusing simplicity, they confuse Turk with Kurd, Osmanli with Levantine, etc.; everybody who wears a red cap is, to their thinking, a Turk.

Try to open the eyes of some of our bourgeois at home who, from father to son, have been hypnotized — dare I say stupefied by the alleged ferocity of my poor friends, the Turks! At the beginning of the Balkan War, was I not scoffed at, insulted, threatened for having defended them, for having dared to say that the Bulgarians, on the contrary, were cruel brutes, and that their Ferdinand of Coburg (by whom all our women were infatuated, and whose colors they wore) was a vile monster?

On this Coburg, to be sure, I have my revenge to-day, for he has proved superabundantly what I asserted then: five times a traitor in ten years, and attacking his allies from behind without warning — I do not see what more one could ask! As for his soldiers — who are almost direct descendants of the Huns — it was of no avail for me

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to describe the atrocities which I have seen, or to quote the overwhelming reports of the international commissions, sent to the spot; nobody would listen to me. No, it was the Turks, always the Turks, against whom they persisted in raising the hue and cry; and they accepted as gospel the periodical petty dispatches about Ferdinand the paladin, with their constant repetition of the refrain: 'The Turks are massacring, the Turks are still murdering and committing the most shocking crimes, etc., etc.'

For various reasons I say nothing of the performances of some of those who were the Christian allies of our good Bulgarians at that time. As for the Armenians, on whose account I have also been no little abused, they have fully justified one of the accusations which I made against them: At Baku, on September 14, several thousands of them, whom the English had fitted out so that they could help them to defend the city against the common enemy, fell back at the first attack; when they were forced to go back and fight, they fled a second time, in wild disorder, at the crisis of the battle. An old Turkish proverb says that 'Allah created the hare and the Armenian of the same substance.'

But my aim to-day is simply to state once more this truth, which is well known to all those among us who have taken the trouble to study the evidence: namely, that the Turks have never been our enemies. The enemies of the Russians, oh! that they unquestionably are; and how could it be otherwise in view of the continual and implacable threat of Russia, who did not even take the trouble to hide her obstinate purpose to destroy them? It was not on us that they declared war, but on Russia, and who would not have done the same thing in their place? Later, history will tell us how this war was begun by some German barbarians, aboard small vessels flying the Sultan's flag, who, in order to make the thing irrevocable, did not hesitate to fire on the Russian coast towns, even before Enver, who was perhaps still hesitating, had been notified. And moreover what did the Turks owe to us? Since the Crimean expedition, we have not ceased to make common cause with their enemies, and lately, during the Balkan War, doubtless to show our gratitude for the generous hospitality they at all times extended to us in their country, we poured out on them an endless stream of insults, in almost all our newspapers — which I know was to them the greatest and most painful surprise. Despairing of their cause, and to avoid being crushed by Russia, they threw themselves into the arms of hated Germany. I say hated, for, with the exception of a very small minority, they do abominate her. Why, then, harbor an implacable ill-will against them because of a fatal error, which has so many extenuating circumstances, and for which they are ready to make amends?

Oh! what an injury it would have been to France if it had been necessary to give to Russia, Constantinople, which was at heart a so thoroughly French city, a city where we were, so to speak, at home, and from which we should gradually have been driven out by the Russians, on their arrival, as undesirable intruders! And what an assault on this principle of nationalities — which is being invoked at the present time by all the nations — if it had been necessary to carry out a certain agreement signed in secrecy, which, besides Stamboul, would wrest from the Turkish fatherland the very cradle of its birth — all these Asiatic cities, Trebizond, Kharput, and the rest, which are essentially centres of pure Turkey.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I said that they were not our enemies, these Turks, who have been so slandered, and that they made war on us only reluctantly. I said, besides,— and I have said it all my life,— that they constituted the soundest, the most honest element of the whole Orient — and also the most tolerant, much more so than the orthodox element, though this last assertion will startle those who know nothing about it. Now, on these two points, behold suddenly, since the war began, a thousand proofs have come to light, which confirm what I say, even to the satisfaction of the most wrong-headed. Generals, officers of all ranks, private soldiers, who had left France full of prejudice against my poor friends yonder, and who considered me a dangerous dreamer, have written spontaneously to me, purely for conscience' sake, to say to me with one voice, 'Oh! how well you know them, these chivalrous people, who are so kind to the prisoners, to the wounded, and treat them like brothers! Depend upon us when we return, to add our united testimony to yours!' I should like to publish all those numerous letters — *signed* letters, mind you! — they are so touching, so sincere; but they would make a big volume!

Le Figaro

In closing, I quote an anecdote which I have chosen among a thousand, because it is typical. In 1916 a French hydroplane fell disabled to the ground, in Palestine, near a Turkish military post; the officers in command after courteously making our aviators prisoners, telegraphed to the pasha who was governor of Jerusalem to ask for orders; and this is the reply they received, word for word: 'Treat them as your dearest kinsmen or friends.' This injunction had been anticipated; for they had received these comrades fallen from the sky like brothers. And when, a few days later, they received orders to send them to Jerusalem, knowing that they were short of money, they clubbed together to lend them what was necessary to make the journey comfortably.

And finally, with no fear of being repudiated by our fighting men in those regions, I venture to maintain, that the greater part of our beloved soldiers, returning from their mad escapade to the Dardanelles, would have been cut down on the seashore had not the Turks shown great goodwill in allowing them to reëmbark: as a rule, they stopped firing on the French boats, whenever there was not a German brute behind them to urge them on.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

BY RIGHT HONORABLE SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK

SOVEREIGNTY and independence are terms in constant use among publicists. Unfortunately there is no general agreement as to the definition of them, or of the corresponding adjectives, and therefore no certainty in their usage beyond the simplest cases. We are not now concerned with the application of 'sovereign' and 'sovereignty' as opposed to the condition of subordinate authorities, or to power which is not legal but merely political, within a given commonwealth, but only with their significance in external relations.

When the governing body of a State, however constituted, is not itself subject to any recognized external control, that State is said to be sovereign and independent. So far there is no dispute but very little farther. It must be acknowledged, indeed, that a State may bind itself in some things by convention, as a man may bind himself by contract, and not thereby cease to be sovereign or independent any more than a contracting party ceases to be a free man. Otherwise no civilized State could be fully sovereign, which would be absurd: for there is certainly none which does not profess to be bound by treaties of various kinds with various other States.

But among citizens, though a man is, generally speaking, bound by his contract (subject to the general requirements of law for making promises binding, whatever they be in the jurisdiction concerned), yet there are some kinds of agreement which are deemed in all or most systems of law to make excessive inroads on the promisor's freedom to exercise his faculties, and therefore, even if men cannot be prevented from making and performing such promises, the law so far discourages them that the courts will not enforce them. An agreement to become another man's servant (in the ordinary sense) for life is an extreme instance; the classes of agreements said to be 'against public policy' in English law, notably contracts 'in restraint of trade,' offer more practical illustrations. Yet there are contracts, or voluntary relations founded on contracts, whereby a man's freedom is very seriously limited, and notwithstanding this they are not only tolerated but actively encouraged. Such is the case with marriage. The assumption that all self-imposed renunciation of right or discretion is presumably bad, either as inconsistent with the dignity of a free agent, or as harmful on assumed general grounds of utility, belongs to an obsolete way of thinking.

In like manner a sovereign State may enter into obligations to another State or States which so far hamper its freedom of action that it cannot be called independent without doing violence to common sense. On the other hand, so long as a State retains the usual attributes of supreme power within its own territory, and continues to exercise that power in its own government and affairs, there is no obvious necessity for denying it the name of sovereign. The

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

question is how far a State may limit its own freedom of action without prejudice to its independence or sovereignty. It would seem, if we attend to the convenience of language and the common understanding of mankind, that a State may very well be sovereign and not independent; but we shall find no settled rule to guide us. It is a pretty general opinion that when a State renounces the power of conducting its own foreign affairs, and especially the right to make war and peace at its uncontrolled discretion, it thereby ceases to be independent, and accordingly States which have bound themselves to that extent are often called semi-sovereign. But many writers of good repute hold that sovereignty is not so indivisible but that a State may give up some part of its sovereign powers, or even cease to be recognizable for the purposes of international law, and remain sovereign in those departments of government where it acknowledges no superior. This is the case of States bound by a federal compact which commits foreign and inter-State relations to the common federal authority while domestic matters of administration are left to the local government. It is current American usage to call the individual States of the Union sovereign, notwithstanding that they are subject, in the last resort, to whatever new authority may yet be conferred on the President or on Congress, or whatever new laws of general application may be enacted, by amendments to the Constitution of the United States. The lesser German kingdoms have in substance less power, in some respects, than American States; uniformity of law, for example, has been carried much farther; but their nominal sovereignty has been saved by allowing them a shadow of diplomatic representation, and could hardly be disputed without offense; a Prussian would certainly be ill advised to do so in Munich or Dresden. No one, however, would think of calling Bavaria, Saxony, or Baden, any more than Massachusetts, independent. I speak (it may be prudent to add at this time) of the German Empire as constituted before the war.

But in 1893 our Colonial Office certified to the High Court that the Sultan of Johore, one of the 'Federated States' in the Malay Peninsula, was the ruler of 'an independent State and territory,' and also mentioned that, by a treaty made with Queen Victoria, he had 'bound himself not to negotiate treaties or to enter into any engagement with any foreign State.' Accordingly it was decided that he could not be sued in a court of justice here; and what was more, the judges adopted the language of the Colonial Office.* It seems not to have occurred to any of them that 'sovereign' need not be synonymous with 'independent.' In earlier cases on the immunity of reigning sovereign princes or their property from legal process the word 'independent' is hardly ever used, even where it would be fully justified; and the true legal view seems to be that the immunity in question is conferred by official recognition of the party as a reigning prince, *i.e.*, as a ruler exercising the usual attributes of government within his own territory (as was stated in detail in the Sultan of Johore's case), and has no necessary connection with independence in the sense of international law. There can be no doubt that the Sultan of Johore, since the treaty made in 1885, is for the purposes of international diplomacy as non-existent as the State of New York, or Scotland — or, for that matter, England, though the majority of Englishmen have probably never thought of it. There is also no

* *Mighell* v. *Sultan of Johore* [1894] 1 Q.B. 149 C.A.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

doubt that his position in a general way resembles that of native ruling chiefs in India, the lesser rather than the greater ones. Neither the Colonial Office nor the Court of Appeal has authority over the English language, and not even the concurrence of departmental and judicial utterances will suffice to justify, much less compel, the use of words in a non-natural and inconvenient sense. An inquiry directed to the India Office whether the native princes of India were independent would surely have had a different answer. In that department it would be held erroneous to ascribe independence to the Nizam of Hyderabad, and no less erroneous to deny him the attribute of sovereignty; and that, I conceive, is the good English of the matter. It seems, therefore, that when we are discussing the derogation from the rights of an independent State which must or may be incident to joining a League of Nations, it will be better to avoid sovereignty as an ambiguous and disputed term, and speak only of independence; better still if we can bear in mind that the question is not of words, but to what extent the parties to a League of Nations must undertake to fetter their discretion in exercising the rights allowed to independent States by accepted usage, and whether in these necessary restraints there is anything unreasonable or excessive, having regard to the importance of the end to be attained.

The most essential point in any possible League of Nations is an undertaking to refer disputes beyond the ordinary resources of diplomacy for peaceable settlement, judicial or by way of mediation according to the nature of the case, by some method which the league has provided or approved for that purpose. Now most European nations, even Germany, have of late years become parties to arbitration treaties; Great Britain had entered into about a dozen before the war. So had the United States. The earlier type of such treaties is subject to a reservation of questions touching honor, independence, or vital interests, but the latest is not. If these and other Great Powers have thereby ceased to be independent it would seem that independence is a kind of legal fiction hardly worth preserving, like the absolute and indivisible sovereignty of certain publicists, which, unfortunately for their doctrine, it is impossible to find in the Government of the United States, or in any federal constitution.

If Great Powers may without undue derogation enter into covenants one with another to refer their disputes to arbitration or the award of a court, why is it a derogation to enter into one comprehensive agreement to the same effect, guaranteed by the joint strength of them all? As for the submission being compulsory, the compulsion, so far as it lies in covenant, is of no other kind than the binding force of a treaty made singly between any two Powers. Indeed, it may well be considered that in a common undertaking between many Powers, of whom no one can be supposed to hold a controlling position, there is less danger of prejudice to equal rights than in a particular agreement between two or three.

There is ample precedent for such undertakings in defined spheres of international affairs and traffic, the Postal Union, for example. Every member of that Union has renounced its power, as regards all other members, of fixing rates of foreign postage at its own will and pleasure.

But it is said that the parties to a League of Nations must renounce their absolute discretion to make war and peace; that the league must, sooner or later, involve a general convention for the limitation of armaments; and that

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this is a renunciation of independence. The assertion of the Colonial Office that the Sultan of Johore is independent will hardly dispose of this objection It is more to the point to observe that a treaty for the limitation of armament, namely, of vessels of war on the Great Lakes, has long been in force between Great Britain and the United States, and it is commonly believed that those Powers are still independent. Moreover, an obligation to go to war in certain events is just as much a restraint on a State's sovereign discretion as an obligation not to go to war; and such an obligation is imposed by every treaty of alliance. But, it may be said, the parties to such a treaty are themselves the only judges of the question whether a *casus fœderis* has arisen (as Italy judged in 1914 that she was not bound to assist Germany); whereas in a League of Nations there must be some common authority to decide that question and call upon the members to render whatever aid is due from them according to their compact, in like manner, though not exactly like, as officers of the law may call upon lawful citizens to aid them in putting down a riot or arresting a felon. No doubt the establishment of such an authority does amount to a substantial delegation of power, and the real question is whether the security for the common peace to be gained by the establishment of a common power is worth its price. Not that precedent is wanting even here. Under the nineteenth-century Germanic Confederation (1814–1866) there was a compulsory process called federal execution, for which the members were bound to furnish contingents when regularly required, and if the confederation as a whole was at war no member could conclude a separate peace or armistice. Yet, when the German Bund was constituted by the Treaty of Vienna, the component States were expressly declared to be independent. Certainly its constitution was cumbrous and inefficient, but that is not material to the argument. Again, the provinces, and even the cities, of the United Netherlands were always considered sovereign by the publicists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Even the stringent military covenants, positive and negative, which Napoleon imposed on his allies were not held to destroy their technical independence. This, however, proves only that there is no magic in the word.

Thus there seems to be nothing amounting to denial of independence in the obligations that members of a League of Nations would have to undertake.

(*a*) Not to make war without the sanction of the league;

(*b*) To take measures, by breaking off diplomatic relations, economic pressure, or active warfare, against any State violating the foregoing rule, or any State external to the league attacking a member of it;

(*c*) To reduce its armaments as part of a general scheme, or to submit the future production of warlike material to the control of some common authority.

Renunciation of the power to make treaties and conduct foreign affairs generally might be considered a more serious matter. Such a step would go a long way towards the construction of a true federal sovereignty. But no such thing has been proposed, only that the members of the league must not make secret treaties either among themselves or with any external State. Mutual confidence being of the essence of the league, such a provision is clearly necessary.

With regard to commercial arrangements, nothing has yet been proposed more restrictive in kind than the 'most favored nation' clauses occurring in many recent treaties.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Establishment of a common legislative power may be said, perhaps, to mark the passage from alliance to federation. In the case of the League of Nations no proposal approved by any body of competent persons has gone beyond Mr. Taft's, which is that a Conference or Council shall from time to time formulate rules to be laid befor the constituent governments, and to take effect only if none of them signifies dissent within a certain time. This is no more a derogation from sovereignty than the process of subordinate legislation by Provisional Orders subject to be disallowed by either House of Parliament, with which we are familiar in this country, is a derogation from the supreme legislative authority of Parliament.

The Fortnightly Review

William Penn, it seems, was not far from the conclusion of the whole matter when he wrote, two centuries and a quarter ago, in his *Essay towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe:* —

> I come now to the last objection, that sovereign princes and States will hereby become not sovereign — a thing they will never endure. But this also, under correction, is a mistake, for they remain as sovereign at home as ever they were . . . if this be called a lessening of their power, it must be only because the great fish can no longer eat up the little ones, and that each sovereignty is equally defended from injuries, and disabled from committing them.

Whether the league as a whole could be properly called sovereign in any and what sense appears to be a rather idle question.

IMPERIAL PREFERENCE AND WORLD PEACE

THE causes of war, in recent years, have been reducible to two main heads — the discontent of oppressed nationalities and economic rivalry. Of these it should be possible, at the peace settlement, to eliminate the first by the constitution of new national States, with guarantees of the rights of minorities. And there is general agreement that this must be the aim. It has even been put forward as the principal aim of the Allied nations. With regard to economic rivalry, there is much less agreement, much less preparation of public opinion, and much more powerful forces enlisted unrepentantly on the side of the conditions that make for war. It is not yet understood that the possession of dependencies is coveted by modern States mainly for the sake of economic exploitation; and that, so long as the 'ownership' of territory is regarded as a means to commercial monopoly, the contest for such ownership must proceed between States, and must issue, sooner or later, in war. The economic and the military policies of States are intimately connected.

President Wilson, in his charter of world peace, has seen and provided for this issue. His third point runs as follows:

> *The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers, and the establishment of equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.*

What is implied here? The President, under the exigencies of an election campaign, has explained that he does not mean complete Free Trade among the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

members of the league. Perhaps he would like to mean that. But America is a land of High Protection, and a sudden revolution in its fiscal system is not practical politics. So far, then, as tariffs are concerned, the principle is to be 'no differential duties among members of the league,' that is, whatever tariffs are imposed or maintained, are to apply equally to all. The 'most favored nation' clause becomes universal; which is the same as to say that it ceases to exist.

But this question of tariffs is only part, and a comparatively small part of the real issue. The real contest between modern States is for the raw materials and the markets of those economically undeveloped regions, which are either dependencies of the great States or have a nominal independence under weak governments subject to diplomatic, economic, and military pressure. Africa and China are the outstanding examples. What international rules are to be applied and observed in such regions?

Presumably, the President has in his mind the all-round application of what is known as the 'open door.' But the 'open door' is concerned with much more than tariffs. What it implies is embodied in a number of treaties. The public hardly realizes the extent and importance of the territories that are or have been subjected by agreement to this régime. They include Turkey, Egypt, Morocco, Abyssinia, the Congo, Liberia, Zanzibar, China, Siam, and the Samoan, Tonga, and Caroline Islands. And the open door, as defined in treaties, involves equal treatment for all nations in respect not only of tariffs but of shipping, navigation on rivers and canals, railway rates, and the granting of concessions and contracts for public works. Such a régime, fully and fairly applied in all the dependencies and 'non-adult' countries of the world, would make the question of territorial sovereignty a matter of indifference so far as the commercial interests of nations are concerned. To take a concrete example — it does not really matter to Germany, from an economic point of view, whether or no she 'owns' African dependencies, so long as she has fair and free commercial access to them. But cut her off from that, and the 'ownership' might become a matter of such paramount and vital importance as would lead to a new war. The trouble about these open-door agreements has been that they have not been properly observed. The outstanding example is the Congo. But there are many others. For instance, in Nigeria, the British Niger Company managed, in effect, during its period of control, to establish a monopoly for its trade which led to serious friction between ourselves and France. We may be pretty sure that, unless this matter is taken up by the league, unless the 'open-door' is made part of its covenants, and the international commission appointed to watch over the observance of the rules, and to call offenders to book, economic competition in these great regions of the world will become once more the cause of political friction which may engender new wars.

How does all this bear upon British policy? That is a point that has been too little considered; and yet none is more vital to the future peace of the world. We are told that we must revise our old ideas in the light of recent events, and abandon the 'shibboleths' of the past. And that is good counsel, so far as shibboleths have really misled us. But the most important revision we need, in our outlook on commercial policy, is a realization of its effect on the peace of the world. All questions of domestic wealth or prosperity hardly weigh in the balance in comparison;

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

since, while the menace of war continues, all prosperity anywhere is illusory. It would be better to be a poor nation, secure of peace, than a rich nation preparing for war.

Now, we know that the present Prime Minister and his followers have accepted the policy of 'imperial preference.' The desirability of this policy from a narrowly British or imperial point of view, will not here be considered. We are concerned with its bearing on the League of Nations. Is Imperial Preference in harmony with President Wilson's third point, and with his great purpose of world peace? Formally, it might be said to be so. For the President has explained that he would leave to all States the determination of their fiscal policy, providing only that there be no hostile discrimination. Hence the argument: 'The British Empire is a State, as the American Union is a State. As they may put a tariff round their territory, so we round ours.' But consider what the British Empire is. It comprises a quarter of the surface of the globe. It comprises every sort of soil, climate, product. Of some important raw materials it has almost a monopoly. No nation in the whole history of the world ever held an economic position so commanding. We talk about the ambitions of other States to achieve world-domination. It never seems to occur to us that we ourselves come nearer to possessing it than any Empire of the past has ever done. Hitherto, what has made this position of ours tolerable to the rest of the world has been our adherence, on the whole, to the policy of equal opportunity. We have not tried to make the Empire a closed preserve for citizens of the Empire. Are we going now to embark on that policy, or are we not? That is the real question, one of world-wide import, concealed behind the phrase 'imperial preference.' We are invited by Mr. Lloyd George to follow him blindfold, on this as on so many other matters. For we do not know what are to be the purposes, implications, and developments of the new policy. Perhaps he does not know himself. Perhaps it has not occurred to him that the whole future of civilization may depend on this concession he has made to British Protectionists. Some things already done by the Coalition Government suggest a very sinister prospect. We may refer, in particular, to the measure, introduced by Mr. Bonar Law, that monopolizes for citizens of the Empire the whole output of palm-kernels in West Africa. Is it in that direction that the Coalition Government proposes to develop British commerce? If it be, our adherence to a League of Nations will be of little enough value. We shall be ruining by our economic policy the peace we profess to be establishing by the league.

This warning cannot be sounded too soon or too earnestly. Most true it is that we must do new thinking with free minds. But this applies to tariff reformers and imperialists at least as much as to free traders and pacifists. The new thinking on this point is that economic nationalism is as much opposed as militarist nationalism to the peace of the world and the good future of civilization. The two aspects of nationalism do, in fact, go together; and by a sound instinct a militarist is practically always a protectionist. For the root idea is the same in both cases, the idea of the independent State, free from obligations, legal or moral, to other States, bent only on its own aggrandizement, and therefore always ready to make war. It is self-contradictory to adhere to a policy of world-peace, and also to one of nationalist protection. And especially is it self-contradictory for the British, who con-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trol so vast a territory and so huge a population. Here and now we have to make our choice. Is the Empire to be a trust for civilization or a prize for some sixty million white men to exploit? Are we, who profess ourselves the champions of liberty against world-domination, to constitute an economic domination of the world? The choice, we may say in Goethe's words, is 'brief and yet endless.' Yet it may be doubted whether more than a handful of men in this country are aware that it is before us.

The Nation

COLONEL GADKE REVIEWS THE WAR

THE world war has come to an end; the German people have cut their losses, and are facing fresh problems. This they have done in order to put an end to the purposeless slaughter that was going on. They are preparing to go straight ahead to build up the future on entirely new foundations.

We will briefly survey the course of the war, so that we may gain some slight idea of the way in which this end has gradually come about. The initial declarations of war were made by us. On all hands we have been regarded as the aggressors. Our idea was, first of all, to defeat the French, while we defended ourselves against Russia. But the forces at our disposal against the French were not sufficient for a decisive victory; we suffered a setback on the Marne which forced us to remain on the defensive for a considerable period. On the other hand, the Russians proved to be much better prepared for war and stronger on the Eastern boundaries of the Central Powers than we had anticipated. This fact and the military weakness of Austria and Hungary, in addition to the gradual internal disruption in their States, resulted in an extremely dangerous and menacing situation, which forced us to dispatch increasingly strong units of our army to the East. In this way the English first gained time to create a large army and to make preparations for a tremendous output of war material of all kinds, so that they might be in a position to take a chief part in the war on the Continent. At the same time all the attacks of the Allied English and French armies during 1914–15 were victoriously repulsed by us, and after the glorious battle of Gorlice we drove the armies of the Tsar back into the interior of Russia. The attack on the part of Italy against the Central Powers prevented us from completing our victory in the East, as we were obliged to send troops to strengthen our allies on their Southwest borders.

In the meantime the badly planned and clumsily executed attack by the French and English against the Dardanelles had been a complete failure; Bulgaria joined us and succeeded in conquering Serbia and Montenegro during the latter part of the autumn of 1915. But the enemy Dardanelles army which had been hurriedly dispatched to Salonica remained in a very inconvenient position for us on the Southern borders of Bulgaria, and finally succeeded in forcing Greece into the ranks of our enemies.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In the spring of 1916 the Central Powers thought that the time had arrived to attack once more in the West. But the German attack on Verdun failed, as well as the Austro-Hungarian assault undertaken from the mountains on the borders of the Tyrol.

In the meantime the tremendous preparations made by the Russians, the French, and the English had been completed, and about the middle of 1916 our enemies made a terrific attack in the East as well as in the West, which brought about the second serious crisis of the war. We only succeeded in mastering this crisis with great difficulty and also by ceding a certain amount of territory. When towards the end of August, 1916, the Rumanians thought that the time had come when it would pay them to join the ranks of our enemies, the downfall of the Central Powers seemed certain. But the skill and energy of our leadership, which in the meantime had been placed in Hindenburg's hands, once more averted the threatened crisis. The Rumanian army was completely beaten, the greater portion of the country, including the most fertile area was conquered and furnished us with extra supplies. Unfortunately all our attempts to initiate peace negotiations towards the end of 1916 and the beginning of 1917 failed. At that time we could have had peace without losing anything, and we should have been glad now if it had come to a 'peace of renunciation' then. Instead of which, on January 31, 1917, the unrestricted submarine war was declared. This undertaking, by which we hoped finally to bring England to her knees and to force her to negotiate, sealed our fate. For it was the actual cause of the entry of the United States of America into the ranks of our enemies. With America's aid, the pressure brought to bear upon us became so heavy that even the great power of the German Empire and the magnificent heroism of her brave armies were not able to hold out permanently. Just as in the case of Russia, and that of England herself, we — badly informed and far too self-confident — underestimated America's resources. And this underestimation of the enemy continued until the summer of 1918, until we realized the truth — too late.

And yet fortune favored us once more. In Russia the Revolution which had long been ripening broke out and the throne of the Tsars was swept away in the twinkling of an eye. It very soon corrupted the spirit of the army, which was no longer willing to shed its blood for a cause which was foreign to it. Gradually the troops disbanded and went home in order to secure land and peace. The repulse of a new offensive under Brussilov, some fortunate German enterprises in Galicia, against Riga and against the islands in the Baltic, brought the Bolsheviki to the helm on November 7. They immediately gave evidence of their desire for peace at any price. After many vicissitudes the peace treaty with Russia was signed on March 2, 1918. This treaty brought us great but insecure gains. In other ways the year 1917 was not unfavorable to us. After we had withdrawn a part of our West front to the Siegfried position we victoriously defeated all the attacks of our numericallyfar superior enemies, and the French especially sustained fearful losses on the Aisne to no purpose. In the midst of all this fighting we were sufficiently strong on October 24 to proceed with our allies to a second attack on Italy, which led in a few days to an almost complete collapse of the enemy's army, which had to be hastily reinforced by French and English troops. This brilliant

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stroke did not suffice, however, to force our enemies to negotiate for peace.

In the spring of 1918, we felt strong enough for a third attempt in the West, for which, however, the whole strength of the German army was not available. Considerable sections were tied down in the East, in the Balkans, and in Asia, and were unable to coöperate in the decisive theatre of war. We won many victories in the spring battles, but could not break the strength of the enemy, whose numbers were so superior. At last, on the Marne, our offensive came finally to an end for the second time. From that time on things took a downward course.

More than one and a half million Americans were now assembled on the soil of France; in Turkey and in Bulgaria the longing for peace was increasing; in Austria-Hungary racial strife loosened the bonds of the State more and more, while the fearful casualties of the Germans and Hungarians crippled the strength of their armies. Our enemies also were able to utilize their superiority in Asia and in the Balkans for annihilating blows; one after another our allies collapsed and betrayed us. Germany had to face a world of mighty enemies single-handed.

When Foch advanced with his very superior numbers, his thousands of tanks and his innumerable bombing squadrons in a surprise offensive, he placed the German Western army in a most unfavorable position. It is true that he was not able to break through for the lion-like courage of our army warded off defeat; but step by step we had to yield to the superior enemy, and in the end the High Command lost confidence in a happy issue of the war. We still remained far superior to any individual enemy nation, but *en masse* they crushed us. In this way also our heavily afflicted people lost confidence and the will to continue the fight. The third and heaviest crisis of the war, provoked by the appearance of the American armies in Europe, overpowered us. The end had come!

The Würzburger General-Anzeiger

THE DAY

Day dawns at last, the light begins to break,
The stars to fade, the clouds to roll away;
The night is ended, weary sleepers wake:
Behold the glory of the new-born day.
The day which brings glad tidings to the world
Of life, and love, and liberty, and light,
Of Freedom's flag with loud acclaim unfurled,
Of Wrong's defeat — the victory of Right.
Downtrodden nations soon again shall rise,
Freed from the curse of the oppressor's rod;
In every land glad shouts shall rend the skies,
And grateful songs of praise ascend to God —
For lo! He brings within all human ken
Long looked for peace on earth, good will to men.

The London Chronicle

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

GERMAN SOCIALISTS AND AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

BY PHILIPP SCHEIDEMANN

NEW efforts are being made in neutral countries and in the Entente nations to call an international Socialist Congress. We German Social Democrats have, for obvious reasons, maintained a certain reserve toward these efforts. At the time when Germany was on the crest of the wave we extended our hands to our comrades on the other side of the trenches in vain. We were the ones who waited for them at Amsterdam, at Stockholm, and at Bern. But they either would not or they could not come. It is now their obligation to take the first step. It is unnecessary to say that their invitation will not be in vain, so far as we are concerned. At any time during the war, regardless of the war situation, we were ready to renew the broken connections of international intercourse. Obviously, we are now ready to do so.

Our foreign comrades will, perhaps, regard more calmly now what they considered our errors and sins, and they will not believe that we wish to come in order to sit in the seat of penance. Previously, they, or a majority of them, were too readily convinced that the Entente wanted nothing more than a victory of justice. They could not understand why, as International Socialists, we gave them no assistance, either directly or indirectly, and they were angered by this. But we believe that we can say to-day that we properly appreciated the fearful threat hanging over our land. No one can reproach us with not having done our utmost to ward off the peril impending for our nation. This is a consolation in our present hour of sorrow. It would have been a very easy thing for the old rulers of our country to have said in that case: 'We were not responsible for getting you Germans into this trouble. The Social Democrats are the ones at fault. Take your vengeance on them!' We have prevented that possibility and we appear before our countrymen with a clear conscience.

We do not deny for a moment that some individuals among the Socialists were carried away by the chauvinist flood of enthusiasm and that we, all of us, may have made errors of detail. But what section of the International can boast that it has never been guilty of similar faults of judgment?

We German Social Democrats do not endorse outright every point of Wilson's programme and the London memorandum. We wanted to rescue our country intact from the war, but to reorganize it then so as to assure different races and fractions of nationalities every conceivable freedom within the confines of a democratic Germany. For this reason we have struggled energetically, before the war and during its course, to obtain autonomy for Alsace-Lorraine and to prevent any effort to oppress the Poles and Danes.

Since Providence has decided otherwise, we are perfectly willing that our border nationalities should determine

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their own political destiny by a referendum. We beg, however, that some consideration be given to the fact that we saw objections to this form of self-determination. Our objections were inconsistent with the principles of democracy. We have seen only too often that the pretense of self-determination can serve merely as a mantle in which imperialists, on our side and on your side of the battle line, cover up their annexationist plans, so long as it seems good policy to mask their real intentions. Thus the Poles are now clamoring for West Prussia and Danzig and the Czechs for the German parts of Bohemia, without paying any attention to the right of self-determination of the Germans. We now see politicians, who have hitherto been the most violent opponents of these views, advocating the principle of making dead history the dictator of tomorrow, of drawing boundaries in accordance with old traditions and of obligating national minorities to subordinate themselves to the interests of larger political units.

No one will dispute the fact that a referendum immediately following a war is merely an emergency measure so far as ascertaining the permanent wishes of a nation is concerned. Nations are called upon in a moment of intense excitement, under the impression of temporary political and military events, to decide the destiny, not only of the present generation but of future generations. Thus the people alive to-day are to decide the political destiny of those who are to come to-morrow. It is not impossible that the plan we German Social Democrats proposed at the time our armies were most successful, of leaving the borders unchanged but guaranteeing complete freedom in every country, would have been no less democratic than the principle now adopted. But no Socialist will dispute for a moment that settling political relationships by a popular vote is greatly to be preferred to brutal arbitrary annexations.

The recognition which the German Social Democracy has accorded to the programme of President Wilson removes the last practical point of controversy between the different sections of the International, and no one can maintain now that sufficient reasons exist to prevent our reunion.

We shall enter this conference as citizens of a country that needs to shirk no comparisons with any other country in respect to modern constitutional provisions. We have attained what we have struggled for for decades: equal suffrage in Prussia, parliamentary government, the subordination of military authority to responsible civil authority, the right of the people's representatives to decide questions of war and peace. We should have greatly preferred to attain these reforms by internal agitation rather than by foreign pressure, but the way that we attain them does not change their character. The French did not free themselves from their Cæsaristic militarism entirely by their own efforts in 1870. Now they are paying back the debt. In that case, they had merely to get rid of an upstart. In our case, we have to-day to dispose of a dynasty deep-rooted in the nation for centuries. These differences explain why the course of revolution has not run parallel. Such variations of form do not affect the essential character of the changes.

Germany is to-day a bourgeois democracy with a capitalistic economy and a strong Socialistic tendency, like England or France. Why should we Socialists remain apart? Indeed, is there anything to separate us except the chauvinist distortions which the bourgeois press presents of our activity,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and an imperialism which rightly sees in the reappearance of the 'red international' a danger for its extravagant plans. We German Social Democrats follow with intense interest the efforts of our foreign comrades to bring about an international congress. We appreciate that their success or failure may possibly change the whole history of the world. For if this war ends with a victory of imperialism instead of a victory of democratic justice, then we shall certainly have another world war, the horrors of which will be many times greater than those of the present one. You cannot forge a chain so strong but what it eventually will be broken.

We are ready to serve the cause of a League of Nations, and a permanent peace of justice, with all our strength and with devoted enthusiasm. If our country obtains a just peace, we shall have the power at home to maintain here in Germany a force of pacifists and international Socialists, watchful for the interests of all humanity. If imperialism wins, the resistance of the German Peace Party and of every other peace party will be broken, and instead of entering a new era of prosperity, the world will sooner or later rush headlong to new disaster.

Vorwärts

THE JUNKERS OF THE BALTIC COUNTRY

Esthonia is almost untouched by the horrors of war, but Courland and the southern part of Livonia have experienced its worst effects, and many of the fine estates in that vicinity have shared in the general disaster. The reconstruction of what has been destroyed is now well under way, and the people are industriously occupied repairing the losses they have suffered. The large manor houses form a little world by themselves, and, although war has brought many discomforts and burdens upon their occupants, life still goes on to a large extent in the old idyllic way. Some of these houses, remote from the main routes of traffic, are almost untouched by recent events, and those who dwell in them experience about the same routine of daily joy and sorrow as in the old days of peace.

The Baltic baron lives and holds his sway in these small principalities. Although much reviled, these Baltic gentlemen prove to be excellent men, whom we appreciate the better the more intimately and the longer we know them. It is true they represent a peculiar type, and can hardly be classed with any other group of similar social status. This makes it the more necessary to judge them carefully and conservatively. The Baltic baron is self-confident and proud of his achievements. Here in Esthonia, which is a naturally poor country with much waste land and swamp, it is a doubly laborious task to make the barren, stony soil productive. These proprietors take an active personal part in this labor. They are industrious farmers and, for the most part, finely educated men. The refining influence of centuries of old tradition is apparent in their families, and makes intercourse with them a source of constantly renewed pleasure and satisfaction. The

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hospitality that prevails upon these estates is charming. Conditions may have been similar in some parts of Germany fifty or sixty years ago before railways were universal. The moment one crosses the threshold he finds himself in the midst of an agreeable, liberal. comfortable home life. The lady of the house greets the visitor with a cordiality that proves the sincerity of his welcome, and the pleasure that it gives her to entertain her guest is obviously so real and genuine as to dissipate at once his possible ill ease and diffidence. We enter a large living room whose walls are adorned with pictures, with well selected engravings and paintings. The great room is furnished as were the houses of the wealthier middle classes in Germany half a century ago. One fancies repeatedly that he must have seen that cherry settee or that walnut cabinet somewhere before. Nothing is ornate or brilliant; everything is comfortable and in good taste. The visitor converses and smokes the inevitable cigarette. The latter is inevitable because the host immediately brings in a great basket of them before the conversation gets really started. The whole family joins in the circle, and almost immediately the stranger becomes acquainted with every member. It is apparent that even without the war these people would have abundant material for conversation. There is no field of human life and effort that they are not familiar with, and from their country retirement they form a clear, undisturbed judgment of events occurring in the noise and confusion of the greater cities. Their circle of interests is remarkably wide. They followed every expression of public opinion, every phase of artistic and literary criticism in Germany, even before the idea of closer political relations with that country was entertained in the Baltic provinces. They appreciate all the motives and all the interests that play a part in the domestic and foreign policies of the Empire. They are excellently informed upon everything relating to us. They share in our intellectual life. No manor house is without its library, composed mainly of German works. These are carefully selected and range from the classic writers to the latest best seller. Until the war broke out every new and important book reached these country people through their reading circles. One notes on the shelves rows of bound volumes of the important German periodicals. The new comers from the outside world do not contribute most to the conversation. We note with growing surprise that our own ideas and information are constantly supplemented by what we hear from our hosts.

The conversation never lags. An invitation to take a walk in the park interrupts a discussion of Tishbein's *Goethe*, and we accept it without being put out by the interruption of our youthful guide. The proprietor knows every tree in his park. He knows who planted it and all its subsequent history. Meantime, the probability is that your host will assure you that the park looked infinitely better before the war, that it was far better kept.

We stroll out to the stables. The cattle are at pasture, but the horses are there. They are exhibited. They are beautiful animals, and look in good condition in spite of the scarcity of oats. They do not have heavy labor, as horse breeding is an important branch of agricultural enterprise. They are magnificent animals, and a span of them in front of a light carriage is a joy to the driver. They fairly skim over the ground at a rapid trot, keeping up this pace without any sign of weariness for twenty or thirty miles. Among these horse-breeding landlords good riders are universal. Both ladies and gentle-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

men ride until old age, the ladies riding astride like the men with great poise and dash.

We are shown the vegetable garden. It differs but little from those we see at home. It is not quite as luxuriant as a garden in the rich Rhine country, but looks more carefully tended. The soil naturally does not yield as readily or abundantly as along the Moselle, for example. The fruit trees are not thrifty, and we are told that many fruits will not mature in this inhospitable climate. June and August frosts are by no means rare in the vicinity of the Finnish Gulf. It is not unusual for the temperature to fall from 70 degrees Fahrenheit to 30 degrees Fahrenheit within 24 hours. But though such a climate is disagreeable, it is not so unfavorable to health as one might expect. Habit accustoms the people to its severity. During the walk through the park, we remarked the unconcern of the ladies, who were clothed in summer white, although the coolness of the evening reminded one of winter.

We return for the evening meal, at which we gather around a long table presided over by the master of the house. We heard many stories of the abundance and excellence of the fare in the Baltic manor houses in times of peace, and of the enormous consumption of food and drink. Our dinner is simple, as war conditions demand, but still betrays the afterglow of better days. We are served crabs, which have almost disappeared from Germany, but are a common delicacy in this country. An excellent dish of mushrooms accompanies the potatoes in place of meat. The mistress of the house serves everyone with cordial generosity, and one scarcely notes the contrast between the elegant service and the simple fare.

We leave the table and chat over a glass of tea and a cigarette. The conversation gradually turns from political affairs to other topics, to foreign countries and foreign people, and we discover that our hosts have been wide travelers. Such travel means much for the intellectual broadening of the Baltic gentry, for they bring back with them to the retirement of their manor houses and their parsonages material for thought and discussion during the long winter evening. Each one shares gladly his store of new ideas and experiences with his neighbors. This supplies something resembling, in its way, the Society of the Salon as it existed many decades ago in Germany, at a time when political powerlessness and stagnation made it the only form of intellectual activity. Intercourse of this kind has made the German country gentry of the three Baltic provinces one big family.

The Kölnische Volkszeitung

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE RAID ON THE MANOR

AMIDST the turmoil of revolution and disorder, the vast majority of Russians have only one thought — the land. According to their lights and dispositions they want it. Some are willing to obtain it by purchase; they, of course, are a small minority who have property themselves. But the mass of thriftless, unenergetic, slow-moving peasantry want it with the least trouble and expense to themselves. The unscrupulous agitator has found in the land question a torch to light the peasant. How it is applied in some cases the following illustrates.

The calm of an early September morning surrounded the old Manor House by the river. For almost a century each September found the old house almost unchanged. The burden of another year's existence passed unnoticed. The ramshackle farm buildings showed perhaps a trifle more decay. The expense of labor and the enormous cost during the war of simple things such as nails and planks had made it impossible for the owners to effect any of the usual patching. The orchard was turning brown and golden. The gathered crops were stacked in yellow mounds on the surrounding fields. The hay-ricks — of varying size and shape — dotted the low-lying fields along the river. A few geese, a couple of dozen ducks, some turkeys, and half a hundred fowls were busy hunting for their breakfast in the goose-grass covered yard. A few cows were being driven out to graze.

The mild, sunny morning had tempted the owner's family to breakfast on the balcony. The profusion of eatables of pre-war times was absent. Farm produce — butter, eggs, milk — were in plenty; but there was little bread and sugar on the table. The family was large — half a dozen sons and daughters, besides several daughters-in-law with their families, were gathered at the board. The post had been brought in from the station by one of the Austrian prisoners now attached to the farm as a laborer. Newspapers were eagerly opened, the political situation discussed with the uncompromising eagerness so characteristically Russian.

'Any reports of agrarian disorder?' asked one.

'Yes,' replied another. 'In the Government of Tula the peasants rose at X——, burned down the house and all the farm buildings, after thoroughly looting the place. The live-stock was all stolen. The proprietor escaped with his life by a mere accident.'

'Well, I don't think anything of the sort can happen here,' remarked a third. 'I was in the village yesterday talking to some of the *muzhiks*. They are all peacefully inclined and perfectly willing to wait for the Constituent Assembly to settle the trouble about the land. They are taking a very sensible view of the matter; but, then, the Glupovka people always were sensible, and there are no young men left in the village to stir up trouble.'

'We must not forget,' said a fourth, 'that we are living on a volcano in eruption. The lava is flowing down the other side of the mountain, so we feel secure; but we must not forget that it is flowing all the time. What we have to fear is not the people here, but the agitators who will influence them to violence. What makes me afraid is the very fact that the summer has

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

passed so peacefully. It cannot last. The very calm of the district must be a temptation to the agitator.'

All speaking together, each tried to prove to his or her neighbor how impossible it was for their district to become disturbed. The proprietors had always been on excellent terms with the peasants. There were no large or rich estates. The district was not a poor one, many peasants had property of their own, and so on and so forth.

In the midst of these mutual assurances of safety arrived an old and very agitated peasant woman. She had been for many years a family dependent. She did not belong to Glupovka, 'our village,' but lived at S——, about five miles north across the fields. She sat down on the steps leading up to the veranda, rocked herself to and fro, abandoned to grief.

It required infinite patience, tact, and knowledge of the people to coax the story from her. At last, by dint of questioning and sympathy, the facts became clear. A certain Pavel, a bad character, who had been for years a curse to the village of S——, was at last caught and sent to penal servitude for ten years. This happened some years ago. Since the revolution, when each separate administrative unit governed itself through an elected committee, the vigilance of prison warders, practically only responsible to themselves, had decreased almost to vanishing point. Pavel took advantage of these circumstances to return from Siberia to his native village, not alone, but accompanied by half a dozen kindred spirits as evil as himself.

Soon after their arrival the scoundrels began a systematic terrorization of S——. The poorer, that is, the more indolent, found it to their interest to support the band, while the wealthier, that is, the more diligent and active peasants, stood in with the crowd under threats of having their houses burned. The agitation had been going on since the middle of August, but such nominal authorities as the militia commissary of the district knew nothing of what was toward. Having obtained complete ascendancy over S——, the band threatened the neighboring villages of E——, J——, Y——, K——, M——, that if they did not stand in with them in causing a general '*pogrom*' of all the estates in the neighborhood they would come in the night and burn them down.

The plan was simple; each village was to '*pogrom*' the landed proprietors nearest them. Those peasants who had close relations with the *pomeschiks* were forced to set fire to the houses of their benefactors after they had been thoroughly looted. If the owners were caught at home they were to be murdered. The cattle, horses, poultry, farming implements, and tools were to be taken by those clever enough to secure them. Half the houses within a fifteen-mile radius of Glupovka Station were to be dealt with that very night and the others the following evening.

The pessimistic member of the family, who was suspicious of the calm, sighed: 'I expect what the old woman says is true. Anyway, it is no use ignoring it. I propose all you women and children leave by the evening train, taking everything of value with you, while we men remain and see the thing through. We had better send some of the Austrians with notes to our neighbors warning them of what may happen.'

When the Austrians returned they brought back from some messages of thanks saying they were acting on the advice to leave at once and take their valuables with them. Others laughed at any suggestion of possible disorders.

. . . . . .

The family left on the evening train,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and with them their wiser neighbors. As the train drew out from the station a fire broke out on the horizon. Presently, as they watched from the windows, they saw another fire, then another and another. . . .

The '*pogrom*' had commenced.

The four men returned across the fields to the Manor House after they had seen the train leave the station. Twilight had merged into night; already the moon, in full harvest garb, was lazily rising in the east. The village church of Glupovka rang out eight o'clock in solemn half-cracked tones. A dog was howling out on the steppe. Dark mounds of gathered corn lay here and there near their path. The scene was informed with peace. Even the insects, so active in the summer, did not break the silence. Nature was resting from her season's efforts.

Suddenly they noticed the glare of a fire towards the north. They waited and watched. Soon another broke out; they could see the flames leaping high, fed as they must have been by straw thatch. Then another and another. Presently the breeze from the westward brought sounds of cries and cheering, intermingled with howls and whistling and the barking of many dogs. The sounds continued for about twenty minutes, rising and dying away. Then came a hurricane of cheering. A moment later the reason became evident — flames burst out in several places. The P——'s estate was being destroyed.

Before the four men came to the Manor House gate they counted fourteen fires in full career at one and the same time. They could not render assistance; to do so would have only infuriated the mob the more. It would not benefit their neighbors. Inaction was the only policy to pursue.

The great theoricians in Petrograd talked glibly about land for the peasants. The justice, even the necessity, of this step was probably not contested by any one of the sufferers out there on the steppe. But license and anarchy let loose on the land are not the way to reform. Those people who shuddered at the bare suggestion of the death penalty by their very action were imperiling the lives of thousands. True, those who ran the risk were only 'boorjoos' (bourgeoisie), but in September, 1917, all people were still nominally equal. The Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Government, with its social and civil wars, class hatred, and swelled head, had not yet attained power.

The Manor House was deserted. The few Russian servants had fled to their homes, while the Austrians had disappeared. The night passed slowly, the four slept fitfully, every now and then making a tour of the yard and orchard.

The next morning a deputation from the village waited on the Manor House. Glupovka had held a meeting and passed a resolution. It had resolved to protect its rights and not allow the destruction of the Manor House, 'because after the Constituent Assembly it would pass to them, and there was no sense in destroying what they would be able to use themselves later on.' The village elders were thanked for their consideration. They also brought the news that over twenty estates had been burned and looted the previous night; in fact, not one property in the district had been spared north of the railway. The wildest scenes had taken place; cows had been roasted in the village streets, a quantity of poultry had been treated in like manner; drink had been forthcoming, concertinas played, and dancing enjoyed. There had been quarrels about loot. The estates had been thoroughly plundered; even the boards

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were taken up from the flooring before the house was given over to fire. But only two proprietors who had tried to defend their houses had been killed; all the others had managed to escape.

During the afternoon a squadron of cavalry arrived at the Manor House. But it was soon evident the restorers of order were in an ugly temper. All their sympathies were openly on the side of the rioters. Their two officers were apologetic. They could do nothing with the men. The delegate from the Council of Workmen and Soldiers was the only one who exercised the least control over them. They expressed their hatred for all 'boorjoos,' and showed their contempt by eating all the poultry on the farm. They ransacked the house, stealing almost everything movable except the actual furniture. They sold the plunder to peasants, who had arrived in carts 'to take away anything we can get hold of when they burn you down,' as they told the proprietors to their face. The soldiers actually sold a sewing machine in the presence of the owners, carrying it out into the yard and loading it on to the cart of the purchaser.

That night the same scenes were repeated. The country was lit up by a score of fires. In many cases the soldiers joined the peasants, adding to the confusion by letting off their rifles 'for fun.' Not a mile away S——'s estate, with its fine house, and many buildings, was blazing. By the light of the flames the peasants could be seen loading carts, while the youths and maidens danced amid the continuous shouting and quarreling of their elders.

When the mad scene was at its height a horseman galloped up to the river bank on the other side. He shouted for a boat. But the soldiers, guessing that this was the proprietor who had escaped from his burning house, protested against his being brought across. 'Let him stop where he is. Let him rot there,' they shouted.

The four men who had remained behind 'to see the thing through,' had the greatest difficulty in rescuing S——, even though they had enlisted the support of the 'delegate.' This did not prevent the soldiers from approaching the five men as they walked to the house, and cursing and spitting at them.

They entered the only room left them by the military rabble. S—— looked haggard. He refused to take his coat off, as he had no time to complete dressing.

'How did it happen?'

'I don't know,' replied S——. 'I had just gone to bed about nine o'clock not believing in your message, when one of my Austrians woke me up. All the Y—— people were in the yard when I came out on the balcony. Some of them were breaking down the cattle sheds, loading the timber on to carts. Some were stacking straw round the house, while others were carrying out the furniture, clothes, or anything else they could lay their hands on. The youths and girls were dancing and shouting; a number of them were drunk. Concertinas were played. I tried to speak, but they kept shouting to me to get away before they got the notion into their heads to kill me. They were harnessing up my carts to carry away my property, and the cattle were being driven off. Just then Karl the Austrian brought a horse round to the veranda. As I rode away the 'canaille' sang:

This is the last day I converse with you,
my friends,
To-morrow at early dawn my family shall
weep.

. . . . . .

The soldiers remained quartered on the Manor House for a week. They

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fraternized with the peasants, whose madness passed with the disappearance of Pavel and his confederates. No one was punished; those who had thieved most were left the richer. What encouragement is there to keep order in such a state of things? The Glupovka peasants saw and wondered. They still had faith in the Constituent Assembly.

The New Statesman

IN THE VINDICTIVE

BY LIEUTENANT COMMANDER E. HILTON YOUNG

[Late Second Lieutenant of H.M.S. Vindictive, Croix de Guerre, République Française. Order of Kara George (with Swords), and Medal for Valor, of the Kingdom of Serbia.]

SOME future Mahan may tell the whole story of Zeebrugge from the point of view of the scientific naval historian. Some future Froude or Hakluyt may make literature of the story of the Vindictive, as literature was made of the story of the Revenge. But the time has not come yet for either the history or the literature; my purpose in the present is a humbler one, to record as faithfully and as exactly as I can a few of the more vivid memories and impressions that I brought away with me from that night of wonders.

As time passes, and the press of small things remembered from Vindictive days grows less, certain scenes and pictures are left standing out in relief. Soon they too will begin to fade, and to be obscured by impressions of the adventure received at second hand, from people who write about it, or people who tell me about it. I will try and set down these pictures and impressions of my own before they go. They may help that historian or literary man to come, in coloring the black and white outlines of his story.

The first memory to set down is about the collection of the volunteers. It was in Flanders, and the scene was our camp, which was a row of railway trucks, set solitarily in the ooze and shining pools of a Flemish pasture. A row of sad, thin lindens, splintered and broken by shells and bombs, stood black against a sunset of pale wet silver. The khaki-clad sailormen were drawn up in a row along the duckboards that served us for a causeway through the mud, while from the steps of a truck I read them a curt notice: 'Volunteers are wanted for an undertaking of real danger.' I told them to go away and think it over, hoping for their sakes that they would not volunteer. All of them had been two years on this front, under continuous fire and suffering heavy casualties. They had just been released, and were to go home for leave before reëmployment. They had earned a rest, I thought; and they must have thought so too;

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but half of them gave in their names during the evening. The first to come was our desperate gang, a club of seven fire-eaters, who had joined together to make a corner in all the 'fierce' jobs. They came together first in the trenches by the Yser, as the crew of a boat that was to row over a forlorn hope of a raid, to land in the German trenches. The army had thought that since there were sailors on the spot it would be nice to have some of them for the aquatic part of the proceedings.

Where the dauntless seven led others were eager to follow, and the number needed might have been obtained several times over. For all I could see, most of the men were quite indifferent whether after their long service they went home to their families or engaged in the new service of 'real danger.' But at the back of their minds, no doubt, there was something more than indifference.

Usually, the sailorman is reluctant to volunteer, and dislikes to be asked whether he will do so. That is due in part to his reluctance to make himself conspicuous before his mates. In part it is due also to a superstition. He thinks that if he volunteers he is 'asking for it,' and tempting Providence, as it were, to 'take it out of him.' But if he is 'told off' he is quite content; then, it is all a question of common luck.

Of the men who had volunteered from our gun's crew fifteen were chosen, and sailed in the Vindictive. Several were wounded, but all survived. I found two of the wounded ones afterwards selling catalogues at the show of naval photographs in Piccadilly. They could hardly believe their luck, they said, at having had such a treat.

The next picture in my memory is of my first sight of the Vindictive in the gray businesslike scenery of the docks at ——. I tramped across the rails and among the sheds, to the edge of the square basin of dirty water, where lay that aged giant, H.M.S. ——. In command of her was Captain Davidson, the nurse of the expedition. Until then I knew nothing of the object or plan of the operations. I had hazarded a guess only that an attempt was to be made to block Zeebrugge. The captain took me out on to her stern-walk and showed me an aged cruiser lying half hidden on the side of her far from the jetty. The cruiser swarmed with dockyard hands and rang with riveters' hammers. 'There is your ship,' said he; 'the look of her must tell you something of what she is for.' Surely it did. There were machine guns and short-range howitzers; there was an unnaturally large top, with a short-range armament; there was a high platform or false deck of wood built all along one side of the ship, and wooden slopes to give ready access to it from the other side for running men. Here was a ship equipped for a landing, and for a landing in the face of the enemy. If to land, then where? The false deck was about the height of Zeebrugge Mole. We are to land parties on the Mole, I thought, and they will fight their way to the lock-gates and blow them up.* It was not till some time later that I noticed the block-ships lying in corners of the dockyard basin, and so came to understand the true purpose of the operation, and the part the Vindictive was to play in it.

But that we were in for a landing in the face of the enemy was clear enough, and troubled by anxious thoughts about

* This was the programme of the expedition to Ostend in 1798 under Captain H. R. Popham, R.N., which resulted in the successful landing of troops under Major-General Eyre Coote, who blew up the sluice-gates of the Bruges Canal, but through stress of weather were unable to reëmbark, and were forced to surrender.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the desperate nature of the undertaking, so suddenly discovered, I went to the wardroom to find, on the company there assembled, an atmosphere inimical to anxiety or trouble. There were many there whose names will not be forgotten; to have known them, even for a few short weeks, was as good a gift as life could give. There were strong Harrison, a quiet tower of confidence and security, dark electric Chamberlain, and dark smiling Bradford, whose manner had ever the graciousness and gentleness with which the true warrior spirit is wont to surround itself, to save it from hurting other spirits less finely tempered than itself. These great fighting men were leaders of the landing-party of seamen, and all three fell, in the Vindictive or on the Mole. There were many others in that wardroom who were to fall gloriously, but these three, of those who died, took a leading part in the work beforehand, and live most vividly in my memory.

We worked together for a fortnight in the docks, training crews and preparing gear; and then, as the time appointed by the moon drew near, the Vindictive and the block-ships moved out of the docks to a lonely and remote anchorage, where they would be free from observation. The land was a gray line upon the horizon; there was nothing to see but a steel beacon standing in a melancholy attitude, with its thin legs in the waves that were breaking white over the sands. All the fortnight that we stayed there it rained hard and blew hard, and it was very cold. The appointments of the Vindictive, whose return, although it was desired, was not expected, were not, it will be understood, luxurious; we were short of officers for the ship's work; all that fortnight we were cold, dirty, tired, and uncomfortable.

The ship was then receiving the finishing touches in equipment, victual, and ammunition. The authorities seemed to take a warm interest in us and to send us some of everything they had. We became a perfect museum of 'frightfulness,' full to the brim with every sort of solid and liquid that could be offensive to the Germans. Even after we were as full as we could hold stuff kept on coming — cases, barrels, bales, boxes, cylinders, and sacks. Towards the end the job of the officer of the watch became half a nightmare, half a joke. All day long tugs and lighters kept on arriving with fresh consignments of gear, some of it necessary, some of it 'just a few spares,' duplicates of what we already had, and for which there was no earthly room; some of it the happy thought of someone who 'thought it might come in useful.' It was as hard work to keep the unnecessary stuff off the ship as to get the necessary stuff on. While one was busy on the forecastle a lighter would ship alongside aft and deposit its unwanted load on the quarter deck; and then the tired hands had to hoist it all back again. There were twelve vast and superfluous casks of oil that showed an ingenuity in stealing on board unobserved that was positively fiendish. Turn your back for a minute and you found them slinking over the side, or you broke your shins on them, already hidden like stowaways in some secret place below. They must have been casks of exceptionally keen patriotic feelings, burning with zeal for the service. We could not but admire their spirit, but they were not wanted: so after they had been repeatedly expelled in vain they were sent on shore to be put under arrest until the expedition had started.

In nightmares there is usually some dreadful thing, a horror that lurks at the heart of the dream. The central horror of the nightmare part of these

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

days was a certain beast of a salvage pump, a thing like a fire-engine, weighing a couple of tons, that the engineers had a fancy for, in case they should have to pump out a flooded compartment. It was after dark; we had just cleared the last of a procession of craft that had been arriving since early morning, and the tired watch were crawling below, when this object turned up alongside on a tug and demanded to be taken on board. We had no derricks, and how to lift it was a mystery to me. I tried to persuade it to go away, but it could not be persuaded. The first lieutenant, who could make heavy objects lift themselves, like a spiritualist medium, was too busy to attend to the affair. The engineers stood in the background and said that the pump was the apple of their eyes.

I am not sure, now, how the thing came on board. I believe that it was hanging for a long time from a davit, chiefly supported by a complicated arrangement of spun yarn, while the scandalized petty officer of the watch loudly took all to witness that he had no responsibility for the proceedings; and I comforted myself with the thought that if the spun yarn did break after all, the guns at Zeebrugge would probably save us the trouble of a court-martial. The climax came when the davit 'took charge,' and swung suddenly inboard. The pump waved itself in the air, leaped at the ship like a tiger, and then, instead of breaking itself into pieces and knocking a hole in our side, as it ought to have done, settled with a slide, as light as a feather, in the exact spot on the deck where it was wanted. What could one do but bow and smirk, like the conjurer when he has produced the rabbit? But the petty officer said darkly that it might happen like that once, but it would n't happen like that twice. The pump was on deck, but there were still hours of work to be done in coaxing it down below, along the passage, and through countless doors, to its home in some obscure corner near the engines. It rests there still, no doubt, beneath the waters of Ostend harbor. I feel for the German who tries to raise it.

It is known, I think, that there were three abortive attempts at the attack before it was actually carried out. Once the ships were all manned and ready but never started. Once we started, and the weather sent us back within the hour. Once we got right over to within a few miles of Zeebrugge when we had to turn and go home because of a change in the wind. The scene when we turned on this last occasion was a strange and memorable one. I came on to the bridge at 10 P.M. The expedition was then at the very gates of Zeebrugge, the Vindictive and the block ships, the transports and destroyers, and countless motor boats for the smoke screen, all steaming in company. A few minutes more and we should be committed to the attack. We were all screwed up to the sticking point; and as I came on to the bridge I was saying to myself, Now we are in for it!

F——, whom I was relieving, turned round to me and said 'It's off!' The wind had failed us at the last moment; there were now light airs blowing off shore, and the Admiral had just signaled to us to go home. Whether I was more glad or sorry I could not possibly say. My mind was a jumble, of pleasure at the relief from sheer funk, and of disgust at the disappointment of our plans. It is good to be relieved suddenly from the prospect that the next half-hour will be an unpleasant one; but it is bad when one has braced one's self for a crisis to have suddenly to relax again with the crisis

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unfulfilled. Anyone knows that who has braced himself to call upon his dentist and found him not at home.

Everything else was in a jumble, too. At sea, and by night, it is not an easy thing to change on the spur of the moment an elaborate scheme of operations, affecting several score of craft, especially when most of those craft are small ones, with a rudimentary signaling staff, or none at all. Signalmen were sent to prominent positions about the Vindictive to wink to all and sundry the essence of the new order, 'Course West.' But some of the small craft farther off could n't see the signal, and some of those nearer at hand would n't. No doubt they did all really keep a pretty good formation, or many in that throng would have been sunk; and none were. But for a time it seemed as if we had run into a block in the traffic of some Piccadilly of the high seas. Motor craft when they are going slow make a loud buzzing noise. As the Vindictive turned she ran into a crowd of them, which seemed to be all sculling round in circles, buzzing loudly, like drowning beetles. The water round was like one of those horrible insect traps that are put in the dining room in summer, charged with sweet beer, and soon become full of wasps and flies, swimming about, tipsy. A motor launch would lurch across our bows, buzzing, and then, when she saw us, fall into a hypnotic state, and as we turned to avoid her turn with us, and come across our bows again. So it seemed at least; but then, in a company of ships at sea, in any emergency, the movements of every ship except one's own always seem inspired by sheer idiocy. Every now and then a scooter would dash up out of the dark and shout at us some question which was quite inaudible above the din of her own motors. Probably it was her position that she wanted to know, so we shouted that back at her. The answer must have been as inaudible as the question, but the scooter did not seem to trouble about that. She dashed off into the dark again, apparently much the better for her little chat.

The dark was full of tiny working sparks, and of the rattling and droning of the invisible motors. The wakes of the speeding scooters drew lines of glimmering white upon the black. Far away over Zeebrugge there was an exhibition of tiny fireworks. It was an air raid, meant to support our attack. Shrapnel sparkled in the sky and strings of fireballs swung upwards with a waving serpentine motion. It was a pity to have to waste all that; but in a few minutes the Vindictive had drawn clear of the crowd, the expedition had re-formed behind her, and we were on our way home, to wait for the next time.

There was nothing more worth remembering, until the night; the long wait at anchor in the same bleak roadstead, far from the land, is best forgotten. The picture becomes sharp again at eleven o'clock at night on April 22. At that hour we had arrived at the point from which we turned back the time before, and the wind was favorable. A few minutes later we had taken the critical step that committed us to the attack, wind or no wind, and we went to action stations. The night was overcast; but there was some star-shine, and also, I think, a low young moon behind the clouds. Altogether there was a faint glimmer of light on the sea, and large objects could be seen dimly some five hundred yards away.

My first station was in the port battery. There were two six-inch guns there, one forward, one aft, underneath the wooden platform or false deck where the leading landing parties

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were now mustered. The after gun was on the open deck; the for'ard gun was enclosed by the shelter deck (below the bridge) above, a storeroom behind, and a bulkhead, dividing battery deck from fo'c'sle, in front. It stood thus in a dark bay or casemate, approached from the battery deck by a narrow entry a few yards long.

I took my station in this bay by a voice pipe behind the gun. In there it was impossible to see more than some difference in the blackness of the shadows. We felt over the gear that was needed for the gun, and then the crew settled down round it, to wait. Some illicit cigarette ends began to glow in the corners; but it seemed an occasion for a little relaxation in the rigor of the rules.

Looking out down the battery decks one could see or rather feel that they were crowded with men, mostly of the marines' landing parties; and presently a lot of them came crowding into our bay through the door from the fo'c'sle. They filled the cramped space to overflowing; one could not move in the dark without treading on somebody; the decks were so full that there was nowhere else for them to go, and they had to stay. They crowded dangerously close round the gun; there was hardly room to load, and if we had had to fire in a hurry they were in danger of injury from the recoil. So all the time we had to be telling them to stand clear, and often to be feeling about in the dark to make sure that there was nobody in the way. That was the chief external occupation and anxiety during the approach.

For half an hour we waited and smoked in the dark, and there was plenty of time for a short look forward and a long look back. There was a reward now for our several failures in a keen sense of satisfaction and relief, born of the disappointments, that at last we were sure of an attempt of some sort, if not of a successful attempt. After the repeated bathos of the failures, and the dismal and nervous waiting, one could almost forget, in satisfaction that something was going to happen after all, the circumstance that the something would probably involve one's own extinction. What else were men thinking about during that half-hour? What do men think about in the presence of death? Some think much; some think not at all. Each must find the best thought that he can, according to his capacity; for the mind, in that pass in which none is so strong that he can despise help, turns for help to whatever it loves best; not in longing or regret, but because in love there is confidence and security. If a man has loved common things best, the thought of common things will be all that he has to help him in the presence of death. If he has loved the face of nature and the good works of man, and above all good friends, then, in this pass, the beauty of the good things that he has loved comes back to him, to be his rest and strength, and the memory of his friends surrounds and fortifies him.

In times of waiting under great stress the thoughts turn not forward, but back. Up till the very last moment, that night, it was impossible to realize with any vivid conviction that the great adventure was actually just going to happen. The ship was stealing along in such profound silence, all round the sea was so completely tranquil, the darkness so limitless and empty, it seemed as if we might go on quietly so forever. So the minutes passed, until now it was a quarter to twelve. Swiftly then came a shock of conviction — we must be within a mile or two of the Mole, and holding our course; in ten minutes we shall be into it. To ear-strained nerves it was a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

good thing to run over again with the gun's crews what they were to expect and what they were to do. In a few minutes the ship would begin to turn towards the Mole under port helm. The Mole itself would probably be invisible in the dark. What we should see would probably be the flashes of the German guns in the battery at the end of the Mole, appearing on the port bow as the ship turned to starboard. Those flashes were to be our target. If we could see the lighthouse on the end of the Mole we were to fire at that too. We were not to open fire before the top.

At this moment, from far away behind us miles out to sea, there came a dull thud! thud! It was the great monitors, waking Zeebrugge with enormous shells. The attack had begun. It was tremendously hearty and encouraging to hear our own big guns opening the dance, and to think that we were getting all the help in our adventure that could be given us. Still a minute or two ticked away, and nothing happened; still there might have been nothing but open sea ahead of us; but in fact the guns of Zeebrugge were less than a mile away. It was incredible that nothing should be happening. Had they no patrols or searchlights at all? Fortune was favoring us beyond our dreams. This was the critical time; every second almost that passed now, without our being observed, much increased our chance of getting alongside the Mole. I stepped up to the projecting embrasure of the gun to have a look round. The foggy air was streaky with some thicker fumes than fog, and behind me I could just descry in the darkness a line of faint gray plumes; it was the motor craft pouring out smoke to screen us.

Then far, far away on our left the brilliant light of a German star shell appeared suddenly in the sky; then another nearer at hand; and then one right overhead. To our seeming, it lit the whole ship and the surrounding sea with an illumination so brilliant that we must be visible for a hundred miles. One could see each individual face in the crowd on deck, staring angrily up at the star, in hard black shadows and white lights. And still the Germans did not open fire. Looking out from the embrasure one could guess the reason why. The sky was now thick with a perfect rain of shell stars; but, clearly as they showed us to ourselves, it did not follow that they showed us to the Germans. As each star fell into the smoke screen that now covered the sea, unless it was within a very few hundred yards of us it was eclipsed as a star and became a large vague nebula. Although then there was plenty of light about, a few hundred yards from the ship everything was blotted out in wreaths, eddies, and whirls of glowing vapor. The German gunners, I imagine, were peering into the vapor, unable to perceive any definite object in the shifting, dazzling glow, and wondering what in the name of goodness was going to come out of it. So we steamed on, until we were some six hundred yards from the Mole and had just begun to turn to starboard to run alongside it, when the storm broke.* A searchlight shone out from the end of the Mole, swung to left and right, and settled on the ship. At once the guns of the Mole battery opened fire. From our dark hole we could see their quick flashes on our port bow. There was a faint popping in the sea all round. More accustomed to the crash which a shell makes when it bursts ashore, I did not realize at the time that this was the

* In fact, I believe the big guns ashore had already been firing at random into the smoke for nearly twenty minutes, but I was quite unaware of it at the time.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

noise of shells that had missed us, bursting in the sea. And then they began to hit. It was during the next few minutes that we had by far the greater part of our heavy casualties; but at the time my attention was so wholly fixed on listening impatiently for the first shot from the top, in order that the six-inch might begin too, that I hardly noticed what was going on. It was afterwards that I remembered the eruptions of sparks where the shells struck, the crash of splintering steel, the cries, and that smell which must haunt the memory of anyone who has been in a sea fight, the smell of blood and burning.

Glancing out through the embrasure, I saw at this moment a fine sight. The wind during the last few minutes had dropped, and the smoke screen was no longer drifting ahead of us. Quick as thought, one of the motor craft grasped the situation. Up on our starboard she dashed, leaping, almost flying across the waves, with furious haste, pouring out smoke as she came. Across our bows, right between us and the batteries she swung, under the very muzzles of the guns, and vanished into her own smoke, unharmed. It was a gallant act, and good to see.

It was the last thing that I saw, for a bit. Something went ponk! just behind me. A Titan blacksmith whirled a heavy sledge-hammer and hit me with all his might on the right arm. The blow sent me spinning down the narrow entry, to fall in the middle of a group of marines crouching on the battery deck.

'Why, what ever's the matter with you?' said one, in a surprised voice, and stirred me tentatively with his foot.

The universe became a black star which had its radiant point just below my right shoulder.

. . . . . .

When things became reasonable again, the Vindictive was alongside the Mole, sheltered for the time from any heavy gunfire. The wet jade-green curve of the wall was dimly visible, sweeping up out of the dark and back into it again. The last of the landing parties was going over the brows, and there was a crackling and flashing of rifle and machine gun fire up and down the Mole. From our top came intermittent bursts of the deafening uproar of small automatic guns, the most ear-splitting noise in the world. Every now and then there was a loud roar and a bright flash aft, on the quarter-deck; I thought for a time that big shells were hitting us there, but it was a pocket giant of our own, which its crew kept firing away steadily all the time, in spite of every distraction. Looking out on to the fo'c'sle one could see the Daffodil nosing into our starboard bow and kicking the water out behind her screw as hard as she could. F—— and some of the crew were busy there making fast a wire hawser to help her to keep her difficult position. Rifle bullets from the Mole made little splashes of fire on the deck about them as they worked.

Coming round to the starboard battery I stumbled over somebody at the foot of one of the wooden ramps leading to the landing platform. As well as I could see in the dark there was a platoon of marines still waiting there, crouched on the deck. A marine officer looked down from the landing platform.

'Are n't these folk going over?' I asked.

'Those are all gone,' he said.

I was having a good sit-down for a minute on a mushroom head in the battery, when shells began to strike our upper works, the funnels and cowls, which stuck up above the sheltering Mole. German destroyers had seen them from inside the harbor and were

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shooting at them from a few hundred yards' distance. When the shells struck a cowl or a funnel a spray of splinters from the thin steel structure dashed down into the battery, causing many casualties there. The top also stuck up above the Mole, just ahead of the funnels; and it was, no doubt, the uproar of its automatic guns that had attracted the attention of the destroyers. But the fire thus directed on them at point-blank range had no effect on Rigby and his stout crew of six marine gunners in the top. While the destroyers' shells were striking our upper works close beside them one heard their guns still bursting out at regular intervals into mad barking. Then there was a crash there, and a shower of sparks. Silence followed it. They are all gone — I said to myself. But in a minute or two a single gun broke out again, and barked, and barked. Then there was another crash, and the silence of the top became unbroken.

Words cannot tell with what a glow of pride and exultation one heard that last gun speak. It seemed impossible that there should be anyone left alive in the top. After the first shell struck it, and when the gun spoke again, it seemed as if the very dead could not be driven from their duty. The *Gazette* has told the story of what actually happened up there; how the first shell killed all the crew but the sergeant, who was severely wounded; and how he managed to get a gun back into action before the second shell struck, wounding him again and putting him out of action. Would that Rigby had lived to know how faithfully his trust was discharged by the last member of the crew that he had trained!

The Iris now appeared out of the dark and came alongside us at the starboard waist. Owing to the heavy swell she had found it impossible to land her men on the Mole ahead of us as she had been intended to do. The scaling ladders could not be made fast. The gallant Bradford and Hawkins, the leaders of her landing parties of seamen, had climbed on to the Mole to try to secure the ladders and had both been killed in the attempt. Bradford climbed up a davit and jumped ashore. He was the first man on the Mole. Hawkins, his second in command, climbed up by a line. The Mole at that point was swept by machine gun fire and rifle fire from snipers, and incessantly illuminated by star shells and rockets. They must have well known how desperate was their undertaking; there could not, I think, have been a braver act.

Now, the Iris was going to try to land her parties over the Vindictive, which, thanks to the continual thrust of the Daffodil against her bow, was keeping her position, fairly comfortably, alongside. But beside the Vindictive the Iris still danced in the swell like a cork, and it was some time before we could get a hawser on board from her, or secure it when we had got it. At last it was done, and the men in the Iris, watching their opportunity, began to jump into the Vindictive. But meanwhile time had fled. We seemed to have been alongside a few minutes only; we had been there an hour, and it was almost time to go. The order came that no more men were to land, that the Iris and the Daffodil were to blow their sirens to recall the landing parties (our own had been shot away), and that then Iris was to go.

The sirens bellowed; we cast off the Iris's hawser, and she backed away from our side, turned, and steamed out to sea, her course taking her right across the front of the Mole batteries at four or five hundred yards' distance. I watched her with a sinking heart, knowing how we had suffered on the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

same course coming in. She had not gone five hundred yards from us when the batteries opened an intense fire. It was a terrible thing to watch. At that short range the light fabric of the little ship was hulled through and through, flames and smoke spurting from her far side as the shells struck. She disappeared from sight in the darkness and a thick cloud of smoke. I thought at the time that she had probably sunk. In fact, as is well known, she survived, but suffered, during those few moments, terribly heavy casualties.

Recalled by the bellowing sirens, the landing parties poured back on board of us over the two remaining brows and streamed down below. It was now our turn to go. The Daffodil gave a snort, expressive of relief at being released from her long hard shove and of satisfaction at its complete success, and backed away. A pre-arranged trick of seamanship was performed, and our bows began to swing out from the Mole. In a minute we were clear, and our propellers were throbbing.

My station for the withdrawal was again at the port six-inch guns. When the guns were no longer masked by the Mole we were to be ready to engage the Mole batteries, and I established myself once more by my voice pipe at the forward gun. Mr. C——, our gunner (now lieutenant), by shoving and hustling in the darkness, managed to get everything ready at the gun and to collect the emergency hands needed to replace casualties in the crew; so I had plenty of time to think things over. The first thought was, 'What luck we have had to get so far! We are actually leaving the Mole; a bit more luck, and really and truly we may pull through.' Then I thought, 'What has happened on the Mole? What has happened to the block ships? I wish I knew!' And then I remembered what I had seen when the Iris passed the batteries, and thought, 'In two minutes that will be happening to us.' My thoughts traveled no farther, and I waited for what was coming.

We stole on in deep silence. The din of firing had wholly ceased; all but the guns' crews were below, and the decks were empty; there was nothing to hear now but the wash of the waves alongside. The whole ship seemed to be waiting, guns ready and attention strained, for the crash of a shell. But the minutes were passing; when was it going to begin?

Thick black fumes were eddying about the decks from our smoke apparatus. Once again, as on the approach, there came a faint popping from the sea. Each moment we expected the bang and the flame. But the moments passed, and still the silence of the ship's progress was unbroken. The moments passed, and astonishment crept into my mind. How much longer it was taking than I expected, before the bad time began! I wish we could hurry up, I thought, and get it over, one way or another! And then I noticed that the popping round about had ceased. What ever can be the matter with them? I wondered; and then I realized with a flash that while I had been waiting and wondering a good ten minutes had passed since we had left the Mole, and that we must be past the front of the batteries, and leaving them fast behind.

I could hardly trust myself to believe it. Had we perhaps been making a détour inshore, and were the batteries yet to pass? The gunner was standing by the embrasure, and could see out.

'What are we doing?' I called to him.

'We're well away,' he said, 'and here come our destroyers.'

So by the biggest wonder of that night of wonders we repassed the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

batteries, not only unsunk, but unhit. Confused by our smoke screen, and flurried, no doubt, by what had been happening on the Mole, the Germans dropped every shot that they fired behind us, in a furious and perfectly harmless bombardment of our wake.

We had pulled through; but we still had a race against time before us, to get out of range of the big guns ashore before we were revealed to them by the dawn that was about to break. With flames pouring from her battered funnels, and burdened with triumph, death, and pain, the Vindictive sped away from Zeebrugge into the North Sea.

The Cornhill Magazine

THE TEST

BY OSWALD WILDRIDGE

VII

By the mere circumstance that the landfall was made by night, the crew of the Nan-Ling found that last phase of the voyage converted into an episode of high romance. Entering the roadstead by day the island would have flaunted its story before them, but now they must needs go in search of an answer to their uneasy questionings. Through the gauzy veil of night it loomed before them a place of mystery — an isle of sleep or one of death, of peaceful unconsciousness or ghastly tragedy. Prudence, of course, bade him wait for the dawn, but when he crossed the threshold of his goal, Dixon Gray parted with the power of waiting. The secret he must have surrendered to him now at any cost. In response to his call every man among the crew volunteered for service in the landing, almost fought for it; and when the boat sheered off he was accompanied by a trustable escort, men of thew and sinew, all keenly set on using their carbines, their cudgels, or even their iron-hard fists.

Though the distance from the ship to the shore was less than a mile, its impress was one of five. None of the band could be called visionaries; all save the captain were tremendously matter-of-fact, but mystery had laid its spell upon them, and the hour and the setting were alike tinged with unreality. All visible objects were distorted — not anything on sea or land within their range of sight corresponded to the actual. They were not even sure about the familiar strip of water-front, the dice-like squares of buildings, from Dane's store at one end to the bungalow of Trenton, the planter, at the other. It was all so lifeless, so appallingly still. It seemed as though nothing but a miracle could conjure life and movement from such an absolute negation. Their own approach, too, was made in silence, the oars muffled; except the subdued swish of the water as it slipped along the side, not a sound until the boat bumped against the fender of the jetty. Clambering at once on to the planking of the dock, they made their way with stealthy swiftness to the belt of trees

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

beyond the narrow selvage of the beach; and here Gray left them, and covered by their rifles struck out across the open, nor halted till he reached the store, the real end of his journey, the magnet which had lured him into the vortex of a cyclone, the greatest of all his adventures. His feet crunching the shingle track, he stepped back and closely surveyed the moon-emblazoned building, every inch of its wide front, its balcony, its roof, and every window, and rejoiced in its freedom from the marks of strife. And yet he was not satisfied. This was merely suggestion, and he hungered for proof, the assurance of sight and speech. Though the signs were those of slumber, they might be those of death. If only he could pierce that screen of outer wall. This was like being in a fog at sea — one of those horrors of the Grand Banks, the same uncertainty, the same blindness. Only worse. For now there was so much more at stake. He wanted to beat upon the door, to cry out names aloud; one moment he told himself that the pirate quest had surely failed, and the next was overwhelmed by dread of the worst. And then, just as he tried the door and found it barred, a window creaked and creaked again; his alert ears caught the tread of a light foot on the balcony overhead, and in that moment he lost the store, the sea, the island, beheld nothing but the girl leaning over the rail, the burnish of the moonlight in her wayward hair coiled loosely about her head, a deep wonder glowing in her eyes.

'You!' she breathed very softly. 'You!' Yet not so softly that he could not hear.

A wave of emotion shook him. 'Thank God. You are safe. Thank God,' he murmured, and the girl leaned still lower the better that she might read his story in his face. His gravity, the intense earnestness of his tone, impressed her deeply. No woman could hear a man speak thus about her without being moved.

'Why are you here?' she asked, but even as she spoke a new thought took possession of her, and she changed her question to a command, 'Wait,' and was gone. But only for a bunch of seconds, just long enough for him to leave the screen of shadow cast by the house and with uplifted hands signal to his men the sign they waited for that all was well; and then the key grated in the lock, and through the open door she came to meet him, a slip of bewitching girlhood, her white frock intensifying her atmosphere of fragility, her hair held captive now by the folds of a fleecy wrap. For a moment, as Gray grasped her hand in a long determined clasp, she held him with her eyes — those eyes whose lustre even case-hardened shell-backs trading at her father's store have likened to the glory of the stars, and their color to the violet — and then she rained her questions upon him. 'Now, tell me why you are here. So soon. And why did you speak so? What does it all mean? Tell me.'

After the manner of those who dwell in Eastern lands did she address him, one accustomed to command, and also to obedient service — but there was supplication also, an eagerness she made no attempt to suppress or disguise. 'It is all so strange. Your landing now — by night. And why should you be thankful for my safety. I have not heard of any danger.'

'But I have,' he told her. 'Great danger. Horrible. Too horrible to think of. It was Chung Won and his gang. They had planned a raid. Here — on the store. Your father's money and you. But they have failed. That is why I am glad. It has been torture,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a crucifixion, the thought that I might be too late. All through the storm. And to think that you should owe your safety to a cyclone.'

'The storm,' she repeated. 'That terrible storm. And you — you fought your way through *that* — for me!'

She hung upon the words as though well pleased by the power that lay behind. This was her hour of discovery, the revelation of a stupendous fact. 'For me.' Very softly, dealing only with herself, she breathed those thrilling words again. Under the lantern light of the moon, Gray saw that she was smiling, caught too the flood of color as it flushed her cheeks.

'You came to save me,' she murmured yet again; and then, 'Tell me about it, please.'

'There's nothing much to tell,' he answered, bent now on making light of his exploit. 'We were at Swatow when the gang put out to sea. Macdonald got wind of what they were up to, and wormed the rest out of one of the Chinamen. And we followed. That is all.'

'All!' Her lips tossed the word back to him, rejected its assurance. 'As if it could be. It is only a fragment. You have not even begun the tale. All this — the plot, its betrayal, your choice, the storm, your voyage — a story big enough for a book, and you crowd it into a dozen words. But then you never did talk well about yourself, Captain Gray, and I'm thinking I shall have to ask Sandy Macdonald for the rest.'

'There is no rest,' he insisted. 'And Mac is not a reliable witness. Not always. Sometimes he can be the soul of caution, but he has his enthusiasms, and his zeal outruns his discretion. I have given you the facts. There is nothing in it but this — I was lying to an anchor waiting for the storm to break and spend itself when that Chinaman came along with his yarn, and as there was no warship we could warn we came ourselves. There's nothing more to tell. I'm sorry to have disturbed you, but I could n't wait for to-morrow. I — I — wanted to make sure that you were safe. And you are. Now you must get back indoors and I'll away to the ship. We have much work to do. Repairs. She was badly knocked about.'

His suggestion of departure she ignored; to his outstretched hand she gave the same treatment. Almost did it seem that she had forgotten the man, every atom of her interest dominated by his revelation. For against her woman's wit his reticence was powerless, it concealed nothing that really mattered, while for other weapons she had her share in the life of the East, her deep acquaintance with sailormen and the ways of the sea.

'All this for me,' she half whispered, a blend of wonder that was almost awe, and assuredly the spirit of joy in her voice. 'When other men sheltered. With that storm about to break. And the glass — I watched its fall — it was terrible.' Then she laid a hand on his arm. 'Do you know what you did, Dixon Gray? You challenged death. Braved it. Risked your life — everything. You, who — told me once upon a time that you — you — would never ask any woman to — take your name because — it was the name of — a — coward. Do you remember that day? All you told me about yourself, the portrait you painted? I have never forgotten it, not a word. And that was the name you chose — coward. That and Mr. Much Afraid. And yet you have done this thing — for me.'

'There has been much joy in the service,' he told her, forcing himself to a stiffness of speech, and yet for all

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his strength and grip not quite succeeding. 'And now you must let me bid you good-night.'

But still she held him. 'To think of it!' she said. 'All that it means. How glad you must be! You will not need to be distressed any longer about your name, nor the — the woman to be ashamed of it. You were wrong, you see. You are not Mr. Much Afraid. You have risked your life to — save another — mine. You are a brave man, Captain Gray.'

'A brave man!' he repeated, not yet comprehending the import of her testimony, all that it involved, its fullness and its promise. He had merely a dim impression that life had somehow changed with him, that he himself was different; but his perspective was all out of focus — formless and intangible. Her eyes strangely ashine, the girl stepped back into the shadows and watched him, her fingers tightly interlocked, a passionate intensity in her gaze. It was just as though she commanded him to see himself as she beheld him — the valiant knight, and not the craven. Once when she moved, Gray thrust out a hand to stay the flight he fancied that she meant; and then at the end of it all — that extremity of silent waiting — she saw the strain fade from his face, knew that the hour of illumination had dawned, and the next moment found herself clasped in his arms.

'My dear,' he cried, 'I see it all now! It is a new man who has landed on your isle to-night. See what a miracle you have wrought!'

But she refused to accept his tribute, his praise.

'There is no miracle,' she protested. 'Nothing but just the old, old story. The tale as old as the hills. You will find it in the Book. In the day of your fear you only had yourself. But then Love came, and Love casteth out fear.'

VIII

On the judgment of Margaret Dane the chief engineer of the Nan-Ling pronounced an emphatic benediction.

'Man, but that's a bonny way o' putting it,' he declared when Gray told him what the girl had said. And then he turned it over. 'Love casteth oot fear,' and kept on repeating the words as though loth to let them go. 'D' ye know,' he said at last, 'I can see that this is the varra thought I've had at the back o' ma own mind all the time, only I was too slow in the uptak' t' dress it oot in proper words. She's got the gift of vision, has this lassie o' yours, an' the power o' speech as well. Love casteth oot fear. A full interpretation in four varra modest words. And noo we'd better turn in, for ——'

But the captain waved the suggestion aside.

'Look here, Mac,' he demanded, 'was this the cure you had in mind that night aboard the Argonaut?'

'It was, my son,' Macdonald answered. 'You see, I'm no' saying that you've lived a' selfish life, but you were fearful self-centred. You'd neither kith nor kin t' fend for nor tak' thought aboot, nor any other responsibeelity t' steel you to high endeavor. An' it is n't good for a man t' have his vision turned in upon himself. It narrows him, helps t' make him little and keep him so. And in some cases it breeds fear. In a general way — mind, I'm no' saying it's always so, but in a general way — bravery has its beginning in taking thought for others. A hen by hersel' wad run away fra a rat, but if she's got a brood o' chickens she'll stand up till an elephant. And that I reckon is hoo it was with yersel'. You were aye thinking aboot Dixon Gray, and the saving of your own skin grew t' be your first law. Even so you might have won through without

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

raising any ghosts, only you'd been fitted with a high-pressure imagination, one of extra-driving power, an' right fra' the beginning you'd a mighty poor chance of escape. The rest of your history can be packed in little room — the gods have been good t' you; they've led you by a lang trail to this bit island, an' this night they've given you something t' live for and fight for. Likewise, they've given you a better law. Self-preservation's varra poor stuff. An' that's the last word. I'm turning in, for I reckon we've a couple o' crowded days in front of us before we've got this hooker ship-shape again.'

Here, however, Macdonald was guilty of error. Only by the labor of four strenuous days was the Nan-Ling made fit once more to face the hazard of the seas, though even then the garb of respectability was in no wise restored to her. In fact, judged by externals, all that the hand of restoration had accomplished was to make her still more disreputable, to complete her garb of desolation. By the storm she had been degraded from the shabby genteel to the guttersnipe, and now she suggested the prize-fighter carrying the scars of a terrific milling. That was how she struck the fancy of Stephen Dane in that hour of the fifth afternoon which he spent in a shady corner of the balcony with Sandy Macdonald to bear him company, Gray being still engaged on the ship. 'Looks like a blooming bruiser, eh, Macdonald,' Dane suggested. 'One who's had a tremendous slogging. All patch and plaster from stem to stern, from her water-line to the rim of her smokestack.' The chief endorsed the comparison with a chuckle, and presently Dane drifted away and Margaret took his place. In all probability if Macdonald had only foreseen what the coming of the girl involved he would have burked the ordeal by flight, but no warning was given him, he was caught before he had time to suspect. Not even when Margaret began quietly to probe into the history of her lover and himself did he detect her drift. It seemed so innocently reasonable that she should be interested in the fate that had thrown them together, the fancy that had forged such a link of affinity and impelled them to sail for so long in company as the firmest of friends. 'I have never seen such a David and Jonathan pair,' she smilingly confessed. 'I'm told that you might have been chief of a first-class boat and yet in the name of friendship you abandon yourself to a wretched tub like the Nan-Ling.' Then, without giving him time for a word, she switched off to the present adventure. 'Is n't it queer how things work out?' she demanded, edging round until she squarely confronted him. 'About this testing of Dixon, you know. Queer how big things hang on little ones.' The chatter of a Chinaman, that was the little thing by which her sense of wonder had been caught; and the big thing for which that chatter formed a most wonderful peg was the redemption of Dixon Gray, coupled with the salvage of her own idyll. 'You see,' she pointed out, 'there would have been no test, no anything but lifelong misunderstanding, if Ah Fang had n't talked so loudly.' And then, 'What a lucky thing that you were standing by when he lifted up his voice.' She laughed softly over the thought, confessed herself immensely attracted by it; and Macdonald, bending forward, peered closely into her face, distressfully alert to the mocking curl of her lip, the roguish challenge in her eyes. 'Imph!' he snapped at last. 'I might have known. There's no keeping anything fra a woman body, especially if she

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

happens t' be in love. Mebbe I should n't have done it, for it's been a fearful risk — though I never thought of that; I was so keenly set on Gray being given a chance t' prove himself a man through and through, that I clean forgot all aboot the crew and the ship and masel'. He'd got t' be tested; I've seen that for a lang while, and I've been waiting till — till he found Margaret Dane. It could n't ha' been done without her.'

'Nor without Ah Fang,' Margaret dryly suggested.

'He's another of the principals,' Macdonald admitted. 'He played up till me in a maist satisfactory fashion, and tipped his varra convincing recital aboot Chung Won like a born actor.'

'At a price,' she hazarded.

'It was dirt cheap, Missy,' Macdonald assured her. 'I gave him ten sovereigns for his sarvices, the pirate yarn being included in the contract. Since then I've seen the danger of him blabbing, an' I've made him a man o' wealth by the gift of another ten for keeping a stopper on his jaw tackle. Likewise, I've promised him that if he does happen t' talk I'll put an end to his life, and call doon a thoosand curses on the spirits of his ancestors. I was bound t' take strong measures. I would n't have the skipper know if it cost me every penny I've got; it would take all the edge off it for him. An' for the same reason, I'm thinking ye'll no' tell him yersel', lassie. Love has n't finished its work when it's cast the fear outside.'

Blackwood's Magazine

THE END

THE SWINBURNE LETTERS AND OUR DEBT TO THE VICTORIAN ERA

BY ARTHUR WAUGH

THE present time is so full of change and dissolution that the younger generation may well be pardoned if it believes itself to be the first in the history of the world to experience any similar vicissitudes of taste and judgment. It almost seems as though revolution was now being born out of the fire for the first time, while everything that lay behind the fiery cloud of the war was hopelessly flat and stagnant. And this opinion, not so unreasonable, perhaps, in the field of politics, is now extending itself across the levels of literature as well. There is everywhere a tendency to speak lightly of old literary traditions, and to imagine that the poets whom our fathers read were mild, complacent people, who took what life offered them with open hands, and asked no awkward questions; nay more, that the very heart of their generation could scarcely beat for the armory of belt and corset which protected it from the open air of nature. It is natural that an era of change and revolution should set such ideas astir; but the theory they embrace takes simply no account of the really significant figures of the generation which is now so

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

swiftly passing out of existence into the world of memory and record. Revolution has always been the secret spring of poetry; and it was so no less in our father's time than it will be in our sons'. We have to reckon with revolution wherever we encounter progress.

The Victorian era (we are told it every day) was a period of stuffy, commercial ideals; and, to be sure, it is easy enough to ridicule its smug respectability; its confidence in the judgment of crowded meetings; its belief in a parliamentary or municipal vote as a sort of passport to Paradise; even its intense anxiety about the survival of its own personality after death. These limited interests, no doubt, were the common food of the common people; and Victorianism, so far as it stopped short at these, is already dead and discounted. But the literature, and in particular the poetry, which rendered the Victorian era illustrious, was, with one or two notable exceptions, a vigorous protest against this very spirit of the time; it was as much the voice of rebellion as the youngest and the freshest voice in any new Georgian choir to-day. We need to remember this, if we are to understand Victorian poetry at all; and posterity is having the way of understanding made clear for it by the singular good fortune which has befallen many of the great Victorians in the choice of their biographers and apologists. The art of biography, it is safe to say, was never more soundly practised than it is at the present day; and no leader of our time has had richer fortune in this respect than that wayward, elusive, but thoroughly lovable genius, Algernon Charles Swinburne. His *Life* has been written with admirable candor and communicative sympathy by his friend, Mr. Edmund Gosse; and now under the same care, with the cooperation of one of the most discriminating of bibliophiles, his *Letters* are given to the world in two well-equipped and annotated volumes.* The efficient performance of such a task is much more than a service to Swinburne's personal memory. It is, in effect, the preservation of the spirit of a great literary movement, the record of a potent and stimulating ideal. And it should do much to clear the atmosphere of criticism, and to explain to a hurrying generation the debt which its own happy emancipation owes to the pioneers of a period that can certainly never be justly dismissed with any glib suggestion of self-sufficiency or supineness.

We look back, then, upon the Victorian era, and we see it almost absurdly disturbed by problems of commercial and scientific progress. The political speeches of the time suggest that the good citizen's prevailing ambition was to possess an income a little more comfortable than his neighbor's; while the theological arguments of his Sunday pulpit were feverishly absorbed in buttressing the authority of the Old Testament against the disconcerting revelations of Darwinism and geology. Even poetry could not afford to let these weighty questions go by default; and nearly ten of the most active years of Tennyson's production were consumed in a noble effort to reconcile the doctrine of evolution with a belief in the immortality of the soul. But it should be noted that Tennyson was the only great Victorian poet to commit himself freely to a compromise with Victorianism. The rest were more or less openly in revolt; and none more emphatically so than Swinburne himself, that brilliant Puck of the meadow of asphodel, that 'flame of fire,' whose lively heels beat a tarantella upon the polished boards of tradition and respectability, and then danced off into the woods of imagination among the

* *The Letters of Algernon Charles Swinburne.* Edited by Edmund Gosse, C.B., and T. J. Wise. In two volumes. London: William Heinemann.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gods and goddesses of a purely pagan paradise. Swinburne was the irrepressible spirit of mischief, which broke up the solemn Wordsworthian tea-party —'all silent and all damned.' He was the harbinger, in the guise of a reactionary, who threw open the gates of freedom to the ungrateful revolutionaries of to-day.

The violence of Swinburne's rebellion is emphasized by its contrast with his descent. He was born in the very centre of tradition, the cadet of an old English family who, in his own words, 'had given their blood like water and their lands like dust, for the Stuarts.' 'I think,' he says in a highly suggestive autobiographical letter to Edmund Clarence Stedman:

> I think you will allow that when this race chose at last to produce a poet, it would have been at least remarkable if he had been content to write nothing but hymns and idylls for clergymen and young ladies to read out in chapels and drawing-rooms.

That would, indeed, be so; and yet the product of the youthful Swinburne sufficiently belied his birth and education. His entire training was in accordance with the typical British tradition. For school he was sent to Eton — surely of all public schools the guarded home of the conventions, whence in due (or rather undue) time he proceeded to Oxford, where the adoption of an easily recognizable attitude to life and thought is (or at any rate was) the only passport to success. Yet, from boyhood onward, Swinburne was absolutely impervious to the conventional atmosphere. 'He has always wanted discipline,' said Professor Saintsbury, 'who has never wanted music or eloquence'; and from the outset the things that most people cared about were matters of no consideration to him. He appeared at Eton clasping a volume of Bowdler's *Shakespeare* under his arm; and he continued, in sheer and simple independence, to defy the time-honored traditions of the place. He liked riding, and swimming, and reading. so he rode, and swam, and read; he cared nothing for the discipline of the cricket or football field, so he simply did not play. The work that interested him he did with a will, and was 'sent up for good' for Greek elegiacs, but most of the school routine was a weariness of the flesh, and he preferred to read the Elizabethan dramatists under the trees by the river. He disobeyed his tutor, and shook his red-gold locks in the face of authority, so that before he was seventeen he had disappeared from the school-list. Thence, after an interval, he passed to Balliol, and condescended, in a mood of compromise, to take a second in Mods. in days when few men read for honors. But when he entered for the Newdigate, he declined to accept the obligatory restriction (laid down in Sir Roger's will) that the exercise should be written in the heroic couplet, with the result that, although he sent in what must have been one of the best copies of verse ever submitted for the prize, the judges had no option but to rule him *hors de concours*. Meanwhile he was continually at issue with the authorities, and, although Jowett appreciated his quality, and did his best to save him, the preponderance of adverse judgment was overwhelming. 'My Oxonian career,' he wrote himself, 'culminated in total and scandalous failure'; and he left Oxford with a mild contempt for all that it stands for, and never consented to be reconciled to its standards.

It is towards the close of his Oxford career that his correspondence now published introduces him to the public; and it displays him in the liveliest rebellion against everything that the Victorian age held most sacred. Above

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

all, it displays him as a fervent and convinced reactionary.

The divine discontent with present surroundings, which has commonly proved the hall-mark of genius, must obviously take one of two directions: it must issue either in revolution or in reaction. And with Swinburne, as with the Pre-Raphaelite friends whom Oxford made for him, reaction was the dominant rule of life. They found themselves hemmed in upon every side by smug pretense and materialism unashamed; and they turned back to the freedom of the past, in quest of a healing inspiration for the future. Their pictures reflected the simple piety of the Flemings; their poetry was haunted by visions of a dimly romantic mediævalism. And the first ambition of their art and poetry alike was to be honest about the primary springs of emotion; to return to nature for a method and a creed; and to realize the value of individual character, instead of concentrating upon the preservation of a type. The inevitable outcome was that the pedants and the prudes were shocked; and there lurked, perhaps, an underlying, malicious pleasure in the process of shocking them. The very earliest of Swinburne's published letters revels in the entertainment.

> One evening — when the *Union* was just finished — Jones and I had a great talk. (Spencer) Stanhope and Swan attacked, and we defended, our idea of Heaven — *viz.* a rose-garden full of stunners. Atrocities of an appalling nature were uttered on the other side. We became so fierce that two respectable members of the University — entering to see the pictures — stood mute and looked at us. We spoke just then of kisses in Paradise, and expounded our ideas on the celestial development of that necessity of life; and after listening five minutes to our language, they literally fled from the room! Conceive our mutual ecstasy of delight.

From 'a rose-garden full of stunners' to the free celebration of natural passion was a short step, after all; and the honest recognition of animal impulse was one of the first bombs to be thrown into the camp of Victorian self-deception. Swinburne and his friends recognized that the majority of the people among whom they moved accepted for the sake of respectability a religious tradition which they had never had the courage to test; and the earliest advance upon the road of honesty was a frank return to a natural paganism, sanctioned by emotions common to the whole human race.

> Wilt thou yet take all, Galilean? But these thou shalt not take:
> The laurel, the palm, and the paean, the breast of the nymphs in the brake.

To Ruskin's prudent apprehension that the youthful Swinburne is plunging into a stream of religious anarchy, the poet makes an absolutely sincere and unaffected reply:

> You speak of not being able to hope enough for me. Don't you think we had better leave hope and faith to infants, adult or ungrown? You and I and all men will probably do and endure what we are destined for, as well as we can. I for one am quite content to know this, without any ulterior belief or conjecture. I don't want more praise and success than I deserve, more suffering and failure than I can avoid; but I take what comes as well and as quietly as I can; and this seems to me a man's real business and only duty. You compare my work to a temple where the lizards have supplanted the gods; I prefer an indubitable and living lizard to a dead or doubtful god.

By 'dead or doubtful god' Swinburne implied, as his letter to Stedman reveals, any sort of personal deity such as contemporary interpretation of the Bible set before its congregations. Like so many thinkers both before and after him, he had passed into a kind of theistic nihilism through the gate of precocious devoutness.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Having been as child and boy brought up a *quasi*-Catholic, of course I went in for that as passionately as for other things (*e.g.* well-nigh to unaffected and unashamed ecstasies of adoration when receiving the Sacrament), then when this was naturally stark dead and buried, it left nothing to me but a turbid nihilism; for a Theist I never was; I always felt by instinct and perceived by reason that no man could conceive of a *personal* God except by crude superstition or else by true supernatural revelation; that a natural God was the absurdest of all human figments; because no man could by other than apocalyptic means — *i.e.* by other means than a violation of the laws and order of nature — *conceive* of any other sort of Divine person than man with a difference — man with some qualities intensified and some qualities suppressed — man with the good in him exaggerated and the evil excised.

He saw the gods of various nations employed for shameless political purposes — one, perhaps, patriotic, another cosmopolitan; and he sought refuge in the honest acceptance of the human instincts, impelling a man to recognize his overmastering humanity. Here, at least, there seemed a natural sanction for natural self-realization.

A consistently good Christian cannot, or certainly need not, love his country. Again, the god of the Greeks and Romans is not good for the domestic (or *personal* in the Christian sense) virtues, but gloriously good for the patriotic. But we who worship no material incarnation of any qualities, no person, may worship the Divine humanity, the ideal of human perfection and aspiration, without worshiping any god, any person, any fetish at all. Therefore I might call myself, if I wished, a kind of Christian (of the Church of Blake and Shelley), but assuredly in no sense a Theist. Perhaps you will think this is only clarified nihilism, but at least it is no longer turbid.

These absolutely sincere expressions of faith and unfaith explain, more clearly perhaps than anything in Swinburne's poetry, the pagan celebration of the flesh which proved so revolting to the earliest critics of *Poems and Ballads*. They explain at the same time the extreme, and almost Rabelaisian, plain-speaking of certain of his letters. If the dictates of the body are natural, it is at least consistent to acclaim them as honorable; and, if that is once granted, there need be no unnecessary shame over perfectly normal processes. Nevertheless, Swinburne was to learn, at the hands of popular criticism, that his contemporaries were simply bound to misunderstand his disconcerting frankness and these letters bear suggestive evidence to a maturer anxiety lest he should be misunderstood and misinterpreted. 'I have been more bewritten and belied than any man since Byron,' he writes; and he retained just enough consideration for 'the ungainly wise' to be willing to protect his own reputation. When he had quarreled with his publisher, John Camden Hotten, Swinburne recalled to memory certain earlier writings of a violent character which he did not desire given to the world; and the emphasis with which he begged his friend Howell to recover them is in itself an interesting concession to propriety.

I should, of course, not like any scrap *signed* with my name, which, in the dirty hands of a Grub Street libeler, might be turned to ridicule, or to any calumnious or vexatious purpose, to fall into such hands if such an accident could be avoided. Neither Hotten nor for that matter any man alive, has in his possession anything from my hand for which I need feel shame or serious regret or apprehension, even should it be exposed to public view; but without any such cause for fear or shame, we may all agree that we shrink, and that reasonably, from the notion that all our private papers, thrown off in moments of chaff or Rabelaisian exchange of burlesque correspondence between friends who understand the fun, and have the watchword, as it were, under which a jest passes and circulates in the right quarter, should ever be liable to the inspection of common or unfriendly eyes.

This, after all, is a perfectly reasonable apprehension; for the rest, the Swin-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

burne *Letters* will reveal to many readers for the first time the absolute sincerity and almost innocent reliance upon natural instinct which, although it must be admitted to have landed Swinburne in awkward places, is at least a triumphant defense against any suggestion of that willful nastiness or ogling relish, which lay only too often in wait behind the veil of Victorian secretiveness.

Anything like bad taste was, indeed, utterly repugnant to Swinburne's character; and while he was always a great fighter, he invariably fought like a gentleman, and hit above the belt. 'It gives a zest,' he wrote, 'to the expression of sympathy to have some points of amicable disagreement'; and, even where sympathy had waned, and disagreement ceased to be amicable, it was the part of chivalry to observe the common decencies of tourney. He hated meanness, and despised that kind of gutter journalism which feeds upon innuendo. A letter of his to Thomas Purnell is an eloquent testimony to his manly detestation of all such corruption of the press. He had been asked to contribute to a new 'satirical journal,' in the interests of a friend; and he was, as usual, ready with generous assistance. At the same time, he sounded a note of friendly warning:

> It implies no impeachment to my confidence in your own good taste and sense if I say as between ourselves that but for my personal knowledge of you I should certainly hesitate — or rather, to be quite frank, I should at once decline — to be concerned in any way with anything in the nature of a 'satirical journal,' especially if there was any breath or hint in the matter of any such connection or reference as you mention, in earnest or in fun, for satirical or for social purposes, with the name or shadow of the name of any 'scion' of royalty. From the *Tomahawk* down to the *Hornet*, I understand such papers of late years have always sooner or later gone into ways on which I should feel it impossible for a gentleman to keep them company without forfeiting his self-respect.

His own newspaper controversies, it is true, were occasionally bitter to the limit of incivility; but it was always his opponent's *views* that he ridiculed, not his personality, nor his private history. He had a peculiar aversion from that form of personal journalism which was very prevalent in the 'seventies of the last century, and he denounced it with full fervor.

> We are wont to boast that in point of literary manners we have got far ahead of the days of *The Dunciad*. It is full time for us to look well to it that we do not fall behind them. This is neither the first nor the tenth nor the twentieth time that I have had to remark how far worse than in the worst days of the past would be such a condition of letters as seems really and rapidly to be coming upon us; when every liberty is conceded to every blackguard whose unwashed fingers will not shrink from grasping it, and every gate of retaliation or chastisement is closed against every man of other than the blackguard's breed.

The reader will surely agree that there is gradually emerging out of these random quotations from Swinburne's correspondence a figure refreshingly at variance from the popular conception of the fiery celebrant of strange passions and political violence. The truth is, of course, that Swinburne's reaction was a reaction not only of art, but of the soul; and that it riveted its loyalty upon the past out of an even more stirring loyalty to the spirits of sincerity and strength. His strongest impulsion, as Mr. Gosse remarks, came from literature; and, while 'he lived in perpetual converse with the Muses,' two special periods shared his heart of hearts. In the Greek drama he found perfection of form, an insistence upon the overwhelming power of Fate, and an abiding sense of the splendid endurance of foiled and suffering manhood. In the Elizabethan drama he was cheered by

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the fresh, shrill atmosphere of adventure, the irresistible manliness, the ready acceptance of the day's fortune, good or evil, love or death. And while his influence was reactionary, his was at least a reaction to consolations befitting *a man*, clear-eyed and firmly-set against every onslaught of an adverse fate. From the Elizabethans, in particular,

> those giants who unfurled
> Their sails against the morning of the world,

he learned the imperishable virtue of friendship; and his early letters abound in the enjoyment of comradeship, and in the noble pleasure of praise. 'Swinburne was the only critic of our time,' says Mr. Arthur Symons, 'who never, by design or accident, praised the wrong things'; and, whether that be unquestionably true or not, it is at least certain that his was over and over again the first authoritative voice raised in honor of work that has since stood the test of time. Such praise could only proceed from a nature impeccably free from any taint of jealousy. 'I am glad,' he wrote in his old age:

> I am glad you like my dedication of the book now in the printer's hands, and glad to know it recalls your own early regard for my own earlier poems; but more especially glad if any verses of my writing may help to disprove the foul tradition of jealousy as natural among workers in our own or any other form of art. Was not that always incomprehensible and incredible to you as a boy? It always was to me.

Friendship and admiration indeed flash out, like jewels, all over Swinburne's warm-hearted correspondence; and there is wonderfully little blame to balance his generous gifts of praise. One eminent Shakespearean, to be sure never fails to draw his fire; Griswold, the traducer of Poe, comes in for a few biting phrases; and there is a single poignant letter which refers, more in sorrow than in anger, to an old friend, now gone astray, who does not hesitate to malign where once he loved. But these are exceptions, and the general evidence of the *Letters* is a triumphant vindication of the good will and sympathy with which the great artists of that period pursued their art — sincerely, for its own sake, and with very little thought of gain. The commercialism of an age of 'Self-Help' never tainted the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. In some of the early letters Swinburne suggests a natural anxiety about ways and means. He is continually short of cash, and at a loss to turn his talent into marketable uses.

> I wish I *had* anything to do besides my proper work if I can't live by it. Which it's very well to pitch into a party like brother Stockdolloger, but what *is* one to do? I can't go to the Bar; and much good I should do if I did. You know there is really no profession one can take up with and go on working. Item — poetry is quite work enough for one man. Item — who is there that is anything *besides* a poet at this day except Hugo? And though his politics is excellent and his opinions is sound, he does much better when he sticks to his work and makes Ratbert and Ruy Blas. *I* don't want to sit in (a) room and write, gracious knows. Do you think a small thing in the stump-orator line wd do? or a Grace-Walker? Seriously what is there you wd have one take to? It's a very good lecture but it is not practical. Nor yet it ain't fair. It's bage.

There is a little of this sort of thing at first (often touched, as this is, with jovial explosions of Dickensian humor) and occasionally the poet is driven to solicit the aid of friends, such as Lord Morley and Mr. Theodore Watts-Dunton, to carry through business negotiations for which he has neither the patience nor the taste. Upon the whole, however, the most conspicuous quality of the entire correspondence is its absorbed concentration upon purely literary interests, and its complete detachment from the incidents of outside life.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Fifty years are covered by the *Letters*, a half-century of crowded events, war, revolution, reform, discontent, and dreams. Hardly an echo of it all, however, falls across Swinburne's messages to his friends. You seem to see this little company of enthusiasts, turning away from the present with its confused, discordant voices, and fixing its imagination upon a past which was at any rate 'great-hearted' and sincere. There they found the fine examples of good workmanship, rich color, and high thought, with which they strove to give their own work an equal meaning for posterity. 'If you have anything to say,' said William Morris, 'you may as well put it into a table or a chair'; and what he meant, of course, was that good design and good material, whatever the medium, must always ennoble the intellect of those who live constantly in its company. The first essentials were sincerity of workmanship and beauty of form; and it was to these that Swinburne, like the rest of his friends, bent every nerve and devoted every thought. His letters abound in passages, intensely interesting to every lover of poetry, which bear witness to his vital absorption in the poet's craft, an absorption vividly colored by what Mr. Symons has called his 'French subtlety, ardor, susceptibility, his sensual and sensuous temperament.' The nervous energy which he poured into his novel metrical experiments was constantly held in check by the restraining influence of the classic models by which he measured and judged every new enterprise. Metre, as one would naturally expect, is his persistent occupation.

> I confess [he writes] I take a delight in the metrical forms of any language of which I know anything whatever, simply for the metre's sake, as a new musical instrument; and as soon as I can am tempted to try my hand or my voice at a new mode of verse, like a child trying to sing before it can speak plain. This is why without much scholarship I venture to dabble in classic verse and manage to keep afloat when in shallow water.

When he was once fairly launched upon his work, he showed extraordinary rapidity, writing nearly twenty printed pages of *Atalanta in Calydon* in a couple of afternoons, and finishing them in that time so perfectly that scarcely an alteration or an addition was needed. This is the more remarkable when it is remembered, as Mr. Gosse tells us, that the physical acts of holding and wielding a pen were always cumbrous to him, and that his actual tracing of the written characters was slow. The flow of thought must have kept in full flood all the time; and he confesses that he never enjoyed anything more in his life than the composition of this poem, adding also some shrewd comments and comparisons of his own.

> I think it is pure Greek, and the first poem of the sort in modern times, combining lyric and dramatic work on the old principle. Shelley's *Prometheus* is magnificent and un-Hellenic, spoiled too in my mind by the infusion of philanthropic doctrinaire views and 'progress of the species'; and by what I gather from Lewes's *Life of Goethe* the *Iphigenia in Tauris* must be also impregnated with modern morals and feelings. As for Professor Arnold's *Merope*, the clothes are well enough, but where has the body gone? So I thought and still think the field was clear for me.

The artist's reasonable pleasure in good work, whether his own or another's, is not, it need scarcely be said, to be mistaken for egotism; and the most winning of all the traits in the Swinburne *Letters* is their continual homage to achievement frankly recognized as beyond the artist's own immediate grasp. His passion for the Elizabethans was the motive force of his own excursions into dramatic poetry, and he never failed to subject

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his newest passages to the crucial test of comparison.

I wrote a bit of a scene yesterday between Murray and the Queen; it is the drier political details that bother me, but without some reference to them the action (and consequently the passion) is unintelligible. I study Shakespeare constantly, *Antony and Cleopatra* especially, to try if I can learn and catch the trick of condensing all this, and cramming a great mass of public events into the compass of a few scenes or speeches without deforming or defacing the poem.

To judge one's self by the immortals indeed is no strain upon self-esteem. The gods stand firm and remote; but one's own fellow men are active rivals. And the refreshing quality of admiration for contemporaries is one of the saving graces of the young Pre-Raphaelites. To Rossetti, perhaps, they owed their first allegiance; he was the presiding genius of the circle; but each was ready to learn from the others and to acclaim each new success with untrammeled enthusiasm. Nor did they think little of their elders, after the too common custom of confident youth. Swinburne's loyalty to Landor, amounting almost to worship of the 'grand old lion,' recurs again and again with eager reiteration. He writes to him, protesting his 'immense admiration and reverence'; when he meets him he has 'got the one thing he wanted with all his heart'; and years after Landor's death (which assailed him as a bitter personal loss), he was forever celebrating his poetry as 'more golden than gold,' and his prose as a shining exemplar before which his own showed pale and thin:

As to the wholly unequaled if not unapproached and unapproachable excellence of his prose, you know how thoroughly I am at one with you. Indeed, it is always a thorn in my flesh when writing prose; and a check to any satisfaction I might feel in it; to reflect that probably I never have written or shall write a page that Landor might have signed.

For Landor was at once Greek and heathen — the characters nearest to Swinburne's adoration; and, though the younger poet professed himself 'born and baptized into the church of Tennyson' as far back as he could remember, he was more than half afraid that Tennyson believed it possible to be 'something better' than a pagan and a Hellene, 'an absurdity which should be left to the Brownings and other blatant creatures begotten on the slime of the modern chaos.' This energetic phrase suggests, perhaps, the proper limit of Swinburne's appreciation. An exquisite artificer himself, he not only set the very highest value upon clarity and form, he was even unnecessarily suspicious of any style that allowed itself to grow turbid or involved. Meredith's insight and humanity compelled his assent, but he could not away with the intricacy and allusiveness of his manner:

Full of power and beauty and fine truthfulness as it is [he writes of *Beauchamp's Career*], what a noble book it might and should have been, if he would but have forgone his lust of epigram and habit of trying to tell a story by means of riddles that hardly excite the curiosity they are certain to baffle! By dint of revulsion from Trollope on this hand and Braddon on that, he seems to have persuaded himself that limpidity of style must mean shallowness, lucidity of narrative must imply triviality, and simplicity of direct interest or positive incident must involve 'sensationalism.' It is a constant irritation to see a man of such rarely strong and subtle genius, such various and splendid forces of mind, do so much to justify the general neglect he provokes. But what noble powers there are visible in almost all parts of his work!

We must, however, make an end of quotations, and enough perhaps has already been quoted to afford a fairly clear picture of Swinburne's artistic creed, and of the fresh, ardent, impassioned atmosphere in which he lived and wrote. 'He suffered,' says Mr.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ernest Rhys, 'from excess of moral energy, a too religious sense of pity, and a too fierce, impassionate sympathy for his fellows'; and it is a true criticism that Swinburne governed his life by his heart rather than by his head, and was always at the mercy of his fervid and undisciplined impulse. But how noble was that heart, and how sincere and generally beneficent that impulse! It is surely one of the richest gifts of life to have loved much, and to have acclaimed one's love in language of imperishable simplicity and power.

The Victorian era (we began by agreeing) was an era of shallow commercial standards, of sham respectability, of much sad self-deception and pretense. But it was a so an age of great men, of heroes, and hero-worship, and the spirit which the hero-worship spread abroad is not a spirit to be despised. No doubt, it kept the younger generation in subjection, and they have taken it out of their own world in revenge. In his dedication to that amusing and often brilliant volume of reminiscences, *Ancient Lights*, Mr. Ford Maddox Hueffer, whose childhood languished in the shadow of the Rossetti-Swinburne group, declares his belief that the young people of forty years ago were oppressed to the verge of extinction by an overwhelming sense of 'those terrible and forbidding things — the Victorian great figures.' Life, he remembers, was for them simply not worth living because of the domination of Carlyle, of Ruskin, of Holman-Hunt, of Browning, and of 'the gentlemen who built the Crystal Palace.' These people, he urges, were held up to the young as standing upon unattainable heights, and yet the young were incited to believe that, if they could not attain to those heights, they might as well cease to cumber the earth at all. And Mr. Hueffer's playful advice to those who come after is simply this: 'Do not desire to be Ancient Lights. It will crush in you all ambition; it will render you timid; it will foil nearly all your efforts. Nowadays we have no great figures, and I thank Heaven for it, because you and I can breathe freely.'

Well: there are not many of us who need to be warned against the desire to become an Ancient Light; we are most of us only too well aware of our incapacity. But discounting the irony which gives the passage its charm, is it so very certain that the worship of great men is a hindering, hampering process to the mind? There was one candid and generally bitter philosopher, at any rate, who thought obliquely otherwise. 'One comfort,' wrote Carlyle in a memorable passage, 'one comfort is that great men, taken up in any way, are profitable company. We cannot look, however imperfectly, upon a great man, without gaining something by him. He is the living light-fountain, which it is good and pleasant to be near.' The worship of heroes has been common to all the great, emancipating periods of history, for the simple reason that, when the mind dwells in confidence upon a noble type, it has a way of catching by reflect on some side-light of the nobility it admires. We should not be so ready to agree with Mr. Hueffer that 'nowadays we have no great figures'; at any rate the world is alive with promise of an ample harvest of great figures in the immediate to-morrow. But there is some truth in the suggestion that the tendency of recent habit and of recent thought has bent increasingly towards the suppression of enthusiasm, towards a sort of nescience, or agnosticism, both of artistic creed and practice, towards the substitution of 'mockery, that fume of little minds' in place of the whole-hearted admiration for its great

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

figures which redeemed the Victorian era from the taint of unalloyed materialism. Is the new spirit better than the old? Is a cold and empty altar to be preferred to a blind devotion? He would be a rash judge who should maintain it so.

For these men were true workers in the field of art, and even truer beacon watchers in a night of spiritual uncertainty. The integrity of their aim and the sincerity of their ideal are absolutely impregnable. Their art was just their life. They did not court publicity in the press; nor betray their self-respect for temporal advantage; nor intrigue for places in the 'Honors List.' Even the honors congenial to their craft were to them undesirable and undesired. Some eager admirer wrote to Swinburne, hailing him as the inevitable successor of Tennyson in the Laureateship. In reply he got no half-hearted repudiation.

> In the name of our common reverence and affection for Landor [wrote Swinburne] let me conjure you not to inflict on me the discredit by anticipation implied in the title of future Laureate: an office for which I expect to see all the poeticules of New Grub Street pulling caps after the death of Tennyson, till the laurel (or cabbage wreath) shall descend on the deserving brows of the Poet Close or the Bard Buchanan. For myself, I can only say of that office what Landor said —
>
> 'That inexpert was always I
> To toss the litter of Westphalian swine
> From under human to above divine.'

Does the present generation really 'breathe more freely' in an atmosphere less remote from the prevalent ambitions of the time; and, if so, is it under no apprehension lest it may perhaps be inhaling air tainted with the effluence of a crowd of paltry little men, elbowing and hustling one another for precedence at the gates of a breathless lift? At least, as we turn over once more the fresh, clear pages of Swinburne's correspondence with his friends, and are admitted to the privilege of sharing his noble enthusiasm for the high dest ny of poetry, and his ultimate confidence in the even higher destiny of man, we may feel, with reverent hearts, that this indeed was how a great poet ought to speak, and live, and hope; and that the example of such devotion to the high service of art can never be without its influence upon posterity. 'Even the gods must go'; but every generation will find its own gods for itself. The age of great men will never pass, so long as the artist embraces his art with the simple magnanimity of Swinburne.

The Nineteenth Century and After

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE WINTER'S TALE

[To save coal many groups of families have arranged to spend alternate evenings together. Each family will take it in turns to play hosts; thus many sets of fires will be allowed to go out. — *Evening Paper.*]

LETTER FROM MRS. HENDERSON TO HER SISTER

Surbiton, 3/11/18.

DEAREST DI,— I suppose you've read about the scheme to save coal this winter by families sharing each other's fires? We start next week spending alternate evenings with the Blakeleys.

I think it is a splendid idea — quite mediæval, in fact. Didn't lots of people collect in one great hall in the olden times — menials sitting at the same board but below the salt — and all that sort of thing, you know? I'm sure I've read something like that in Scott — or was it Maurice Hewlett?

Your loving

Vi.

P.S.— Of course the above arrangement could only be carried out with *really nice* people and old tried friends like the Blakeleys. *On ne s'entend pas avec tout le monde.*

LETTER FROM MRS. BLAKELEY TO HER BROTHER, LIEUTENANT HANSON, IN FRANCE

Surbiton, 10/11/18.

Dear Peter,— I think I told you about our arranging social evenings with the Hendersons. You know how patriotic I am, and I always did try to take my share in the sufferings of the war, just the same as you boys out there; but I think that when some people get hold of an idea they become almost fanatical. Would you believe it, Mrs. Henderson actually had her two servants in the room the other evening sharing the fire with us.

The servants looked thoroughly uncomfortable the whole evening, as well they might. And with them there, how on earth could I tell Mrs. Henderson that I had discovered my cook sending parcels of food from my stores to her brother in France, or that I meant to give Mary notice next month for impertinence? Really there was nothing left for one to talk about. Some people have no idea of the fitness of things.

Yours affectionately,

Miranda.

LETTER FROM MRS. HENDERSON TO HER SISTER

Surbiton, 10/11/18.

Dearest Di,— We've started our 'social evenings,' but I must say that the behavior of the Blakeleys is a little ridiculous. They 'dropped in' the other night actually got up in evening dress! Since Mr. Blakeley hooked that soft Government job Mrs. B. makes herself quite foolish with her pretense.

I had Martha and Jane in as well, so that the kitchen fire could go out, because when one starts coal saving one ought to do the thing properly, for it's that spirit of thoroughness that is helping us 'to pursue the war to the bitter end,' as Lloyd George once said, or was it Lansdowne?

Anyhow Mrs. Blakeley made Martha and Jane feel thoroughly uncomfort-

31312

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

able, poor girls. I don't know whether they sat below the salt, but certainly it was as far from the fire and Mrs. Blakeley as possible. And this morning they both came to me and said they'd give notice if they could n't have 'a place to themselves to sit in at night.'

Truly the way of the patriot is hard.

Yours ever,

Vi.

FROM MRS. BLAKELEY TO LIEUTENANT HANSON

Surbiton, 20/11/18.

Dear Peter,— The Hendersons must be effecting a great saving by spending half the evenings of the week at our house. They are accompanied by their boy, Edward, aged eleven, who does his home lessons here by our light and using our ink. The worst of it is he mutters aloud over his tasks, which is a bar to any intelligent or sustained conversation. Also, when in the throes of arithmetic or algebra, he seems in torment and scrapes our chairs unmercifully with his feet. I think he ought to do Scripture or something light and less exciting the evenings he comes in here.

Yours affectionately,

Miranda.

FROM MRS. HENDERSON TO HER SISTER

Surbiton, 22/11/18.

Dearest Di,— I don't believe there is any more patriotism in Mrs. Blakeley than there is heat in her fires. She just uses the Government and newspapers to hide her meanness. Instead of fuel she has a mixture of clay and something else equally ineffective made into balls. She says she read about this in a newspaper article entitled 'Clay Balls as a Coal Substitute.' Bob, who looked very cold, asked rather bitterly if it was in the same journal that suggested the eating of rhubarb leaves. After this Mrs. Blakeley seemed rather distant. We left early.

Yours ever,

Vi.

LETTER FROM MRS. BLAKELEY TO MRS. HENDERSON

Surbiton, 29/11/18.

Dear Mrs. Henderson,— Henry and I have decided to drop 'social evenings' and have the usual evenings by our own fireside. I fear the stress of present times does n't leave one much energy to be sociable, after all.

Yours sincerely,

Miranda Blakeley.

FROM MRS. HENDERSON TO MRS. BLAKELEY

Surbiton, 30/11/18.

Dear Mrs. Blakeley, — I quite agree. In any case we're all laid up with colds and won't be out for days. I fear we got a chill the last evening we spent at your house.

Do you mind giving me the name of the man who wrote 'Clay Balls as a Coal Substitute?' My husband wants to have a little frank talk with him.

Yours sincerely,

Violet Henderson.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AUCTIONS

BY KATHARINE TYNAN

In the country in which I have the honor to live the whole world goes to auctions. It is a form of gambling which may be practised by those who have conscientious objections to cards and horse-racing. It has the advantage over bridge that one dares to laugh, and may be interested in another's success where it has not interfered with one's own. Altogether it is a most agreeable form of lottery.

As demand produces supply, it follows that all the world is auctioning its goods and acquiring other people's. The number of auctions every day is quite remarkable; and as the most confirmed auction-goer cannot be in half a dozen places at once, it follows that there are chances such as there would not be in a place where a rare auction draws all the world.

Then the elements may be on your side. If it is a hard frost or a wet day the number of pleasure and profit-seekers may be sensibly diminished. If the house should be far enough from other houses and a railway station to prevent easy access, and the day is a bad one, the fates are on your side. Dealers are the persons most to be dreaded, but the mug with plenty of money is almost, if not quite, as bad. Sometimes he will drive out the dealers in disgust. If he should then get tired himself of paying impossible prices, your opportunity, if you are a bargain-hunter, is at hand. Once at a sale in Dublin, in Horse Show Week, from which the dealers had departed, cursing the squires and squireens who were playing with their money, in the heel of the evening, when the buyers were sated, I acquired some thirty-six Chinese plates — not of the best period, reported an expert later; only worth about a guinea apiece — for as many shillings.

The best chance of all is at the sale of a 'residue' of furniture which does not attract the dealers. In this country auctions are really honest auctions and without reserve. I had almost forgotten their delights, having been put off by London auctions, in which the house had been taken for a fortnight and furnished with whited sepulchres of furniture, very smart, with plate glass and gilding in front and unseasoned wood behind — and I am only regaining the delights of the honest auction.

I went to one the other day — a residue. We went to buy useful things, of which we required a good many, as we were setting up house, and had shed our useful things in another land. So we were interested in garden and kitchen requisites, and only looked longingly at dining-room and drawing-room. There was a good deal of Sheffield plate, a sarcophagus, Georgian, on claw feet, with very fine lion handles, and a Sheraton spinet, delicate and demure, with the green shell inlaying in perfect condition, and the keyboard, which some barbarous owners of spinets are having removed in order to make the spinet into something it is not. Maker's name, James Clementi. The spinet drew our longing eyes most of all. Every motor-car that drove up contained, we were sure, people who had come to buy the spinet, and we en-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vied them. The useful things being acquired, we lingered on just to see what the spinet would fetch.

Our purchases at that auction were many; in fact, we were the principal buyers. Let me, at the risk of being written down a Sapphira, record the items of the bag while I remember them. There was a large linen cupboard, white painted, in two parts, two small wardrobes, hanging and shelved, a kitchen table (very excellent, my cook assures me), a towel rail, a mahogany double washstand with a marble top, four wash tubs, two lawn mowers, one a Pennsylvania, a hose reel, three stone hot-water bottles, five copper moulds and a copper saucepan, a clothes-horse, a clock, a terrestrial globe, a golf bag, with sticks, two umbrellas, three antlers, and — we were ashamed to look honest people in the face — an eighteenth century Sheraton spinet. Our bill amounted to, well — not quite three parts of a ten-pound note.

I sit respectfully at the feet of the wise, who tell me — I read it in a *Times* leader the other day — that there is no such thing nowadays as a genuine bargain; that all the bargains and collections have been picked over long ago; that it is the age of fake, and so on. Well, I missed the other day at an auction the original Dr. Syntax's *Tours*, with the illustrations by Rowlandson, which was sold at eleven shillings. It was the one jewel in a rubbish heap, and the books were too unimportant to be catalogued. No one knew anything about it except the one who bought it and ourselves, and we, unable to see the book, put it down as a reprint.

The excitement is quite as great as in any other form of gambling, but, for some reason, much less baneful. We may wear the auction face while we are bidding with passionate anxiety for odd lots of crockery and lucky bags in which half the articles may be cracked or broken for what we can see. But we are always ready to laugh; even at the frequent repetition of the name of a buyer. Mrs. — shall we say, Smith No. 2? — was a reckless buyer at a sale the other day. The time came when we laughed hilariously while she took the drawing-room fender out of our mouth and dashed the Chippendale card-table from our lips. 'Bedad, ma'am, ye're a divil!' shouted a voice of unwilling, or only half-willing, admiration. But when we go to remove our purchases we fraternize. We compare our bargains and congratulate each other on our good buying; we console each other for the bad. We discuss the points of the bargains and recommend French polishers and such things to each other. We may even discover that the same university mothered us both, or that we followed the same political leader in a stirring past, and strike up friendships for life.

A country auction, within easy reach of town, is best for fun as well as for bargain hunting. There is an electric quality in the crowd absent from more hardened auction-goers, and the spectacle of a pair of excited men bidding for an article of household furniture to far beyond its original cost in the dark ages, moves us to visibility. 'Bedad, I would n't like to be you goin' home to the misthress this evenin',' says someone to the winner; and he acknowledges, with rueful good humor, now the fight is out of him, that 'Herself 'll make it warm for him, sure enough.' Which reminds me of a friend of mine who, dropping into an auction by the merest chance, found herself the possessor of a wagonette in excellent order, admirably adapted to the needs of a large and growing family, for two pounds. Going home, full of pride, and imparting the fact to the male critic on

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the hearth she was received with the question: 'Has it rubber tires?' This was in the days too before motors had sent horsed vehicles on to the market at 'desperate reductions.'

One of the best auctions I remember was where all the possessions of two bachelor brothers and a spinster sister went to the hammer. It was in a somewhat inaccessible country place, within five miles of the city; there was a hard frost, and none but horsed vehicles, so there were only the buyers from the immediate neighborhood. My purchases on that occasion consisted chiefly of china, but a portion of the bag were two old Indian shawls, which became mine for a pound. If I had willed it I might have also purchased for a song beaver hats of the Regency, and beautifully embroidered waistcoats, or delicate flowered muslins of the early Victorian days, with short waists, frills at the feet and babyfied sleeves in which some girl must have looked adorable. These things are the sadnesses of auctions. Indeed, there is always a sadness, for the auction means the breaking-up of a home and the violation of sacred privacies. But let me not drop a tear lest it should be called a crocodile one.

The New Witness

THE LAST BOHEMIAN

BY S. HUDDLESTON

It is possible that in a strictly accurate sense there are still Bohemians, by nature not by nationality, in Paris; but with the apostasy of Hégésippe Joucla the war has at last, on the very edge of peace, converted into the most conventional of citizens the man who for me represented in its quintessence the spirit of Bohemia. With his transformation, a transformation that appeared incredible, a phenomenon which has the air of finality has emerged. If Hégésippe Joucla can wear cuffs and a clean starched collar and work daily from morn till eve in a Government office for a fixed salary each month, the ultimate possibility has been reached. The miracle of the war did not happen at the first or the second Marne. It happened on the Boulevard St. Michel.

Revisiting that leafy thoroughfare of the Latin Quarter the other evening, I encountered on the sheltered terrace of a café (not a cheap, dismal little café but a large and *chic* establishment) my old acquaintance. He was scarcely recognizable, and I betrayed in my fumbling greeting the astonishment that seized me at the sight of the old, fierce beard no longer uncombed, but smooth and glossy. Hégésippe had on a respectable blue jacket, with a white handkerchief sticking out of the pocket a thought too far; he had a bowler hat, very slightly exotic; and his trousers, if a trifle conspicuous in pattern, were of the ordinary cut, and were creased even to excess.

Think of him in the old days of peace and poetry! Ragged and unkempt, he spent his days in talking

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of art. He was eclectic in point of literary masters. The most strenuous diversities of style, the most clanging contrasts of poetic dogma, did not affray him. He accepted them all, fought for them all, fought against them all, and again fought for them all. He adopted every new label. He has been a Décadent, a Parnassien, a Symboliste, a Romantique, a Naturiste, and professsed a dozen other cults besides; and he has belonged to two or more camps, in deadly opposition in their doctrines, in the same *soirée.* He has argued for preciosity, he has argued for simplicity. He was swept by every movement, and washed hither and thither on the waters of poetic dispute. But always he was faithful, in matters of dress and of manners, to Paul Verlaine.

Always he attracted a crowd of young students, some moved by curiosity, some by mockery, but most of them genuinely eager to listen to the opulent orotunda of his eloquence, which was apparently addressed to the impassive circle of old-time Queens of France on their pedestals among the trees.

He even produced verse of considerable art and feeling, which he recited sometimes with effect. He was never sulky, seldom angry, always vivacious. Often he has slept *à la belle étoile;* but when his friends have offered to provide him with a settled situation he has refused haughtily and with a proud sense of injury, preferring to pay the price of passing his nights on the Pont Neuf for the pleasure of being free to babble of Guillaume Appollinaire, of Paul Claudel, or even of the latest twenty-year-old founder of a typewritten review devoted to the most original conception of the poetry of the future. For he was, in art, always on the side of the Bolshevik.

This, then, was the disorderly individual who, now dressed in a fashion relatively correct, was reading *Le Gaulois* — that journal of the aristocracy of the Boulevard St. Germain! —. by the feeble light of the dying autumn day. He had almost the spruce appearance of a clerk in a Government office. That was, in effect, what he was, as he dolefully confessed before I had even had time to question him. I looked at him and mumbled an amazed, an incredulous greeting, and he laughed at my surprise, made me sit down by him, and with a wry mouth announced: '*Me voici! — un bourgeois!* Yes, it is true. Good-bye the old days and my old ways! I am employed in the administration of *la patrie.* I gain 500 francs a month. I am dressed like the respectable father of a family. I keep a budget of my expenses. *Enfin,* I am the most miserable of mortals.'

'You exaggerate,' I told him. 'You are far from unhappy. You cannot deny that it is better to dine regularly than to dine *au hasard;* that it is preferable to sleep in bed than to pass the night in admiring the moon; that there is an unexpected poetry in feeling that the citizens are at the mercy of your good will and efficiency, and that you are that most indispensable tyrant of mankind, an administrator.'

'To think, *mon vieux,*' he replied, 'that you, even you, do not sympathize.'

'Pardon,' I said, 'but I do. I sympathize with you for all you have lost; but also I congratulate you on all you have gained. Admit now, there are advantages in being a bourgeois, just as there are disadvantages in being a Bohemian.'

'True,' he answered, shaking his head sadly, 'but the advantages of my present career are merely material. What do I not relinquish on the spiritual side? Where are my disciples?

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Scattered to the winds! Those who loved to listen to my words — not always wise perhaps — are mobilized — some of them walk forevermore in the shades. And I am that despicable thing a *rond de cuir*, a leather cushion resting contentedly in an official chair.'

'How did it happen?' I asked.

'It happened because I found myself alone, deserted. No one had time for my . . . commentaries on the margins of poetry books. And, as you know, I have never been apt at anything in my life, so that I am, after all, an ideal person for a functionary. It was a general movement, and I can never resist new movements. All my fellow Bohemians are in Government offices, and I could not remain isolated, a voice crying in the wilderness, a spirit restlessly wandering in vain search of vanished companions. I succumbed, and I am what you see.'

'What of the future?' I demanded.

'The future?' he cried. 'There will never be the old Bohemia again. Life is too grim, too tragic, too pregnant with the reality of these four years, for us to play at Nero again. The world will be a new place and the old things have perished. No more can one murmur with a sort of royal languor:

Je suis l'Empire à la fin de la décadence,
Qui regarde passer les grands Barbares blancs.
En composant des acrostiches indolents,
D'un style d'or où la langueur du soleil danse.

The Manchester Guardian

THE IRISH THEATRE*

In its comparatively brief career, the Irish National Theatre has already passed through at least three distinct phases. At its inception, two of its originators — Mr. Edward Martyn and Mr. George Moore — had in view the production of the 'drama of ideas' corresponding (with the changes necessary to adjust thought and atmosphere to the meridian of Dublin) to the plays brought out by the Théâtre Libre and the Independent Theatre. The third coadjutor, Mr. W. B. Yeats, aimed, however, at something much more distinctive and national; and it is to his influence it is due that, after a couple of seasons' experiment with imported players, the Fays' Irish National Dramatic Company took the place of the original Irish Literary Theatre and devoted themselves almost exclusively to the folk-play and the poetic drama founded on Irish national legend. It was during this period that the acting of the company, as a whole, reached its highest level; it was during this period also that the most remarkable of the plays so far produced in Dublin first saw the light; but the blaze of notoriety which made the Abbey Theatre suddenly notable to two continents arose, in the first instance, less from its histrionic and poetic art than from its conflict with a peculiarity of the Irish temperament. When, after the first production of *The Playboy of the Western World*, the rumor spread through Dublin that some of the

**The Contemporary Drama of Ireland.* By Ernest A. Boyd. Dublin: The Talbot Press. London: T. Fisher Unwin. 5s. net.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

speeches were hostile to faith and morals and the fair fame of the Irish character, everyone knew that, whatever might be the ultimate fate of the actors and the author, they would enjoy full houses for the remainder of the run. For the only time in its history the Abbey Theatre was packed to the doors night after night with persons who had come there in the eager expectation of being insulted. The ensuing riots gave the company the advertisement they needed to draw public attention to the excellence of their performance; and having secured a hearing by accident, they retained it by their solid merits.

For some time all went well; the subsidy on which they had managed to exist during the time of non-recognition was withdrawn, but it was no longer necessary; the support they received in Great Britain and America was sufficient to tide over the less productive seasons at home. But gradually a process of disintegration set in. One by one the principal members of the original companies seceded from the fold; Synge died; Yeats, Colum, and Lady Gregory produced nothing comparable to their earlier efforts; the new playwrights modeled themselves too strictly on their predecessors; the players, whether spoiled by their success, or lured away by the easy applause of music-halls, became careless in their art and, worst of all, began to imitate their own methods. At the present day, to parody an old saying, there is no longer an Abbey Theatre; there is only a theatre in Abbey Street. The old spirit seems to have vanished, and no new enthusiasm has come to take its place.

Mr. Boyd thinks that the way of salvation may be found in a return to the original intentions of the founders; that the repertory of the Abbey Theatre might embrace both folk-play and psychological drama. But without denying the possibility of some such union of effort, without denying the merits of the works that have already been produced, it appears to us that, so far, the Abbey Theatre has made but little addition to permanent dramatic literature, and that after an experiment of nearly twenty years' duration there does not seem to be any large prospect of better results in the future. None of the Abbey writers has exhibited the opulence of a great dramatist; they are seen at their best in one-act pieces; symptoms of exhaustion set in before they reach the completion of the conventional three-act play. *The Eloquent Dempsey*, one of the most popular pieces in the repertory, is a typical example of this failing; there is an excellent idea for a short sketch, but the action is protracted far beyond what the material will bear, and the rousing fun of the opening scenes drags out in wearisome repetitions at the close; and even then it needs a 'curtain-raiser' and tediously lengthy intervals between the acts to furnish a meagre night's entertainment. Synge himself, the man of genius of the movement, had little skill in the tiresome but necessary stage carpentry of the drama. In the revolt against 'Sardoodleum' the revolutionists discarded certain elements, which indeed are the mainstay of Scribe's and Sardou's works, but which are no mere orthodoxies of an outworn school. Deft construction will not, by itself, insure immortality; but without it none but a superhuman genius can command success. The value of a sense of form is shown by the history of Wilde's plays. Their intrinsic shallowness dooms them to eventual oblivion; but their superficial sparkle brought them temporary prosperity, and the subtlety with which the thin thread of intrigue is carried forward

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from one scene to another, with a progressive heightening of tension until the moment of solution is reached, has prolonged their stage life beyond the span of the season to which alone their literary merits would have entitled them. The school of Yeats and Synge have no such masters of technique to cover their deficiencies. Until the Abbey Theatre gets rid of the indefinable air of breathlessness and amateurishness which pervades it, until some Irish author arises strong enough to people his stage with living characters 'in a concatenation according,' we cannot expect to see in Dublin a native drama able to compete on equal terms with that of Paris or London.

Mr. Boyd's work has been done in a sympathetic spirit, and although we do not agree with all his verdicts (we lament the absence of any mention of *The Suburban Groove*, which, in our opinion, ranks second only to the best productions of the Abbey Theatre), we value the dispassionate temper of his judgments, and the clearness of his analyses of the plays he criticizes; and we have no doubt that he has produced the most candid and adequate record we are likely to get for some time of what has been, at the worst, an exceedingly interesting literary and dramatic experiment. There is an excellent bibliographical appendix and a full index, which add greatly to the worth of the book from the point of view of the serious student.

The Spectator

ECONOMICS, TRADE, AND FINANCE

GERMAN SABOTAGE AT LILLE

(*From Our Special Correspondent*)

[The following article is the work of our special correspondent, who recently visited Lille to investigate the state of the French cotton trade on the morrow of the German evacuation, and to survey its prospects of revival.]

THE disastrous condition of the textile mills in the Lille district owes little to the normal destruction of war. It is the result of deliberate and settled action by the German authorities. Work ceased generally in the mills within a few months of the German entry into Lille in the autumn of 1914; only a few were kept working on German orders. The first interference came with the commandeering of all raw materials; later yarn and finished goods were taken; then material in process of manufacture, such as cotton on the cards and on the spindles. Finally, in the third and fourth years of the war the Germans began the destruction of machinery. A good deal of it they broke up into scrap and carted away for use as munitions, giving in return a paper note of hand for its value as broken metal. Some machines they took away intact to Germany; this was chiefly the newest machinery, and particularly that of flax spinning. From what was left standing they carried away the brass and copper parts. They were more drastic in their handling of the flax mills than of the cotton or wool. Lille has 90 per cent of France's flax-spinning industry. It was before the war a serious competitor with Germany, and there is a strong presump-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion that the Germans sought consciously to cripple French trade.

The present situation of the Lille mills can best be understood if one gives in some detail the state of two or three mills which are by no means exceptional cases. One may take first the mills of the Fine Cotton Spinners' Association. These, seven in number, are at Hellemmes, Fives, and Monsen-Barœuil, all suburbs of Lille, and contain about 480,000 spindles. I went over the largest group of these mills, the four at Hellemmes, which have 300,000 spindles. In a spinning mill of five stories one found the basement, which contained preparation machinery, absolutely bare. All the machinery had been taken out and broken up and the room used for stabling horses. In an adjoining shed filled with slubbing, intermediate, and drawing frames half the machinery was left, but as the glass of the roof had been shattered by an anti-aircraft shell the metal was rusting. On the first floor were fly frames, all very dirty and almost impossible of further use. The mulerooms on the upper floors were completely empty, the machinery having been thrown through the windows into the yard below. From a smaller mill close by twelve twining frames had been taken away whole to Germany, and from the rest the copper and brass parts had been removed. Everywhere in these mills bearings and rollers of copper, the footsteps and brass collars on the spindles had disappeared. The newest machinery had especially suffered. All the machinery here was by Dobson and Barlow. One mill of 100,000 spindles remains almost intact except for the abstraction of copper and brass. In the engine-rooms electric cables and dynamos had gone, as had all the brass apparatus, indicators, and gauges, and the driving ropes. In the boiler house the copper pipes had been taken. A similar state of things prevails at Mons and Fives. At the latter place 45,000 spindles are untouched, and could be started at once if carding engines were transferred from other mills to replace the present damaged ones. It is clear that at the fine cotton spinners' mills English fitters will have at least six months' work before them, providing new machinery and new parts are available, before anything like general production can be resumed.

Other firms in Lille have more machinery left and could start earlier. But as the machinery is English, Lancashire fitters will be needed to put it in repair.

The mills of MM. Louis et François Motte et Frère at Tourcoing have been dealt with in much the same way. Ring doubling—rooms with Platt's 1913–14 machinery have been emptied; the rest is rusty and useless and will probably have to be scrapped. The dyeworks is ruined; most of the machines were taken away, though it is curious that one by a German firm was left. In a mill of 24,000 mule spindles all the slubbing and intermediate frames have gone, and one section of the drawing frames and all the cards are only fit for scrap. On the other hand, another of the firm's mills, with 30,000 ring and 6,000 doubling spindles by Howard and Bullough, is in good state except for the removal of copper and brass, and is thoroughly repairable.

One Lille firm which has suffered very severely is that of MM. J. Le Blan Père et Fils, whose mills were mostly destroyed by the munitions explosion of 1916. But before that the Germans had stripped the machinery — 64,000 cotton spindles and 8,000 flax spindles. One of the prominent flax spinners of Germany came over to superintend the destruction and to choose the newest machinery to take back to Germany.

In illustration of what one has said

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the flax-spinning industry, the case of MM. Paul le Blan Père et Fils may be quoted. Two fifths of their machinery (which is all English, by firms like James Mackay and Sons) of the newest kinds was sent to Germany, two fifths was broken up for scrap, and one fifth was left, but left denuded of brass and copper. In this work of pillage the Germans employed Russian prisoners. One of the firm's mills became in German hands a soda-water factory, and a line of railway was constructed alongside.

These examples have been chosen at random from among the mills of Lille. One might easily extend them, but enough has been said to show the nature of the problems that now confront French industry. The first element in reconstruction is that of cost. All manufacturers have reported to the French Government the state of their mills and the extent of the damage done. The future is looked forward to with apprehension. Mill building and equipment costs have quadrupled since the war. No one cares to move until he knows how the State will assist him. I heard a good deal of criticism of the dilatoriness of the French Ministry. Lancashire's contribution depends in part on both governments, for when the financial basis of reconstruction has been settled priority must be granted by the British Committee already set up. The question of raw material is also of international concern. Our prospective cotton supply is short enough to raise some anxious questions as to its apportionment between the claims of Lancashire and the Continental buyers.

Meanwhile France has to maintain many thousands of unemployed factory workers. The refugees who left Lille in 1914 will shortly be returning — they are at present deterred from returning owing to the food shortage. Employers are receiving every day inquiries from their workpeople that it is impossible to satisfy. A system of doles cannot continue indefinitely.

The Manchester Guardian

THE OUTLOOK IN MEXICO

THE sudden close of the world-war has revived the hope that the United States Government may find time to attend to the means of assisting President Carranza's Government to restore order in Mexico. The London prices of the leading Government, railroad, and other stocks, though below the highest figures attained in October, are in general considerably above the then lowest, and much better than at the end of last year, and a demand is noted this week for certain railroad stocks. Conditions appear to be improving, even in the disturbed northern States. The President's Message to Congress, delivered on September 1st, mentions that some 107,000 hectares, or more than 260,000 acres, of land have been given or restored to communities in various parts of the Republic, and the continuance of this process should prove an effectual means of allaying agrarian discontent. The Message gives particulars of considerable public works and of one important railway extension, and states that the safety of communication by rail is increasing, and that the railways are well guarded. Little has been heard lately of the activities of the bands of Villa and Zapata, and they have probably been reduced almost to impotence by the exhaustion of their ammunition. Still, last August a revolutionist general (apparently a Zapatist) demanded $60,000 of the authorities in Morelia, in Michoacan, threatening to blow up the electric power station of the city (75 miles distant) if it were not forthcoming; and the threat was carried out. And the termination of the war opens the way to a danger which it is to be hoped the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Peace Congress will take steps to preclude, namely, the sale of the surplus stocks of arms and munitions in Europe to traders who may export them to revolutionists in Spanish America — while the activity of these latter may be stimulated by soldiers of fortune from Europe and German strategists out of work. There may, indeed, be danger in sales even to the governments, for there is reason to believe that no Mexican Government since the fall of Diaz has been able to protect the contents of its arsenals from the revolutionists. However, the large German element in Mexico and other Spanish-American countries will probably be joined by fresh immigrants, who will have lost any sympathy with German aspirations after world dominion, and will have every reason to promote internal peace. But President Carranza's Government, which, according to the Message, has induced Congress to authorize the raising of loans at home or abroad, amounting to 300,000,000 pesos, or £30,000,000, can only obtain them, under existing conditions, in the United States. Informal conversations regarding them have taken place, according to the Message, with American bankers, but they are not likely to be approved by the Government at Washington unless adequate security is furnished, and the assistance of American experts is accepted in 'straightening out' the finances of Mexico. President Carranza has already availed himself of such assistance spontaneously, but the passages in the Message devoted to foreign relations suggest that he may take his stand on the dignity of the nation, and that foreign governments may find considerable difficulty in negotiating with him. A foreign loan, however, is the only means by which Mexico can be rapidly extricated from the plight into which she has sunk during the past seven years of revolution.

The Economist

TALK OF EUROPE

A GERMAN OFFICER AT THE ARMISTICE MEETING

A MEMBER of the German Armistice Commission has given the *Vossiche Zeitung* the following details of the events accompanying the signing of the armistice.

The Commission arrived on November 8 from Spa at the French lines, where several motor cars were waiting to take us to the appointed place. The motor drive with the French officers lasted ten hours, and it appeared to me that the drive was intentionally prolonged in order to carry us across the devastated provinces and to prepare us for the hardest conditions which feelings of hatred and revenge might demand from us. One of the Frenchmen silently pointed out to us a heap of ruins, saying 'Voila St. Quentin.' In the evening a train was ready for us with blinds down, and when we arose next morning the train had stopped in the middle of a forest. We now know that it was the forest of Compiegne. It was perhaps a measure of precaution that we were not taken to some town. We were in a forest where there were no houses or tents,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and were obviously completely surrounded by soldiers. On the lines were two trains, one occupied by Marshal Foch and his staff, the other by us. In these two trains we lived, worked, and negotiated for three days. Our train had a sleeping saloon and a dining car, and was comfortably furnished. We had everything in abundance, the officer in charge of our train ordered everything we asked for, and there was nothing to find fault with.

The great enmity and hatred that apparently prevail against us were, however, shown in the negotiations and by the terms imposed upon us. Those of us who were soldiers wore military uniforms and the Iron Cross. Our presentation to the half dozen French officers with whom we had to negotiate was made in a cool manner.

Marshal Foch, whom we only saw twice, at the beginning and at the end of the conference, is a stern, plain man. He did not speak a single word to us in that polite tone which in former times distinguished the most chivalrous nation. He received us with the words *'Qu'est ce que vous désirez, Messieurs?'* and asked us to take a seat in the big car filled with map-covered tables. As it had been decided that everyone had to speak in his own language, and everything had to be interpreted, the reading of the terms lasted two hours. It is incorrect to say that Marshal Foch told us there could be no question of negotiations but only the imposition of conditions. Whatever coldness Marshal Foch may have shown, he was never ill-mannered or rough. We then withdrew to our train. As we had been sent out by the old Government and had no instructions whatever to sign everything unconditionally, we divided, under the direction of Herr Erzberger, the various matters under the headings of military, diplomatic, and naval affairs, and then negotiated separately with the members of the enemy commissions, which were composed solely of officers. All these officers showed the same cool correctness as Marshal Foch, which was not once tempered by a friendly word, with the exception, perhaps, of the Chief of Marshal Foch's Staff, who showed a little more politeness. The English Admiral throughout adopted the same manner as the French. In reality there was nothing to negotiate. We only pointed out the technical impossibility of some of the conditions. We were allowed to send code telegrams to Germany from the Eiffel Tower, but were otherwise cut off from the outer world in two trains in the middle of a solitary wood. Marshal Foch went away twice obviously to Paris, and couriers brought papers within two hours. The enemy were thus able silently to present us with the Sunday morning Paris papers announcing the abdication of the Kaiser. We observed no smile, no triumph on their faces, but we saw their hatred.

The revolution did not really disturb our work. Our credentials signed by the German Government remained valid. We were speedily able to deliberate with Ebert and to moderate the unconditional surrender terms of the new Government by small concessions on the part of the enemy. Just before the end of the second and last general sitting we protested against the document with its inhuman conditions which had been forced upon us but we were finally obliged to sign it.

A SWISS NOTE ON PRESIDENT WILSON

From the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, a Swiss independent journal, comes the following estimation of President Wilson as the spokesman of a world class.

'Wilson's hour has struck. The

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gravest responsibility which ever rested on a human being is laid on his shoulders to-day. It lies in his hand to call down heaven to the hell upon earth, . . . to conjure up perpetual peace. . . . The German people are on the point of casting off their clanking chains. . . . Wilson will have to exert all his spiritual and moral power to prevent it from being once more flung into irons, and its best intentions brought to shame and discredit through blind Chauvinism and deaf revenge. May he not suffer a misled but noble people to . . . atone for the sins of an unscrupulous government. . . . When Wilson proclaimed war against German militarism, he demanded force; force, force to the uttermost. German militarism is overthrown. Now is the time for justice to the German people; justice, justice to the uttermost! Wilson's exalted principles must be applied and realized with equal justice towards both sides — if Germany, if the world, is not to perish. . . . Wilson's inner-political demands coincide with those of the young German democracy. The enemy of German democracy is Entente Imperialism. Will the former find in Wilson the hoped for ally? The rejection of an extremely accommodating peace offer, and exaggerated armistice conditions will lead to nothing else than fanning the flame of the proletariat revolution, first in Germany and then all over Europe. And indeed, *if the democratic bourgeoisie, which is best exemplified by Wilson, were to fail in the present situation, the public bankruptcy of the bourgeois-democratic ideal would be proclaimed.* It would have proved itself powerless against Imperialistic and capitalistic temptations and its incapacity to realize its high ideals. The way to the world would be free for proletariat democracy. To what end, good or bad, remains to be seen.'

THE AUTHOR OF 'J'ACCUSE'

Who cannot remember, says *Les Annales*, the stir produced in Europe by the appearance of a volume in which the author, acknowledging his German nationality, demonstrated that the full responsibility for the war rested on the shoulders of the masters of the Empire? His accusations were as formal as they were daring. The Allies made use of these arguments, which threw so vivid a light on the intrigues of Germany, with the result that Germany, humiliated and angered, ordered the seizure of the book, issued a warrant of arrest against the anonymous author, and declared him guilty of high treason. But as always happens in such a case, the volume roused an increasing curiosity. Indeed the number of translations made for neutral countries was so great that Professor Delbrück declared that every Norwegian farm possessed a copy.

The author of *J'accuse*, did not remain inactive. The threats and the hatreds directed against him did not prevent him from furthering his task of truth and justice. He answered his traducers by the publication of a second volume — *Their Crime.*

To-day, in the light of the revolution thundering in his country, the author stands revealed. He is M. Richard Grelling, and dwells in Zurich. He offers his collaboration to the German Government, but requires, first of all, that the measures taken against him and his work be rescinded.

It is to be hoped that this man who did not hesitate even while Germany was on the crest of the wave, to tell the world the message of his indignant conscience, will be respectfully listened to.

THE KAISER AGAIN

The French press continues to reclaim the extradition of the Kaiser;

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the British press discusses the legality of such a process.

With all respect to the French experts, who are unnamed by the newspapers that quote them, we venture to assert that the ex-Kaiser is not extraditable. By a code of law agreed among most, but not all nations, one country will give up to another a person charged with one of the crimes specified in the Treaty of Extradition, provided that sufficient *prima facie* evidence is laid before the Government asked to surrender the culprit. Extraditable offenses are crimes against the person or property committed by a private individual. Crimes against governments are political and non-extraditable. The Kaiser's crimes are heavy and numerous enough, but they were committed by him as the Head of a State, *viz.*, the German Empire, and cannot come within a treaty of extradition. Whether the Kaiser is now a private individual is irrelevant.

MR. KIPLING'S INSCRIPTION

From the *Spectator:*

Mr. Rudyard Kipling was asked by the Imperial War Graves Commission to choose an inscription for the great stone which is to be placed as a monument in each of our sadly numerous war cemeteries abroad. His choice will commend itself instantly to everyone. Nothing could be simpler, finer, or more appropriate than the phrase from Ecclesiasticus about famous men: 'Their name liveth forevermore.'

EDITOR'S NOTE-BOOK

The Right Honorable Sir Frederick Pollock, late Corpus Professor of Jurisprudence at Oxford, and, since 1916, Judge of the Admiralty Court of the Cinque Ports, is an English jurist of international reputation.

Colonel Gadke is well known to the German people as the author of popular books on international affairs and military matters.

Philipp Scheidemann is the leader of the German Socialist Party; during the war he has been an outspoken critic of the Imperial Government.

Lieutenant-Commander E. Hilton Young, Liberal Member of Parliament for Norwich, has been attached to the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve since 1914.

Arthur Waugh, author and critic, will be remembered in America as the biographer of Tennyson.

Katharine Tynan, Irish novelist, essayist and poet, is likewise no stranger to Americans.

J. E. G. de Montmorency, is an English barrister who has won distinction in letters as well as law.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE PIPER

BY HILDA SKAE

Oh, sweet and full by the mountain pool,
And low and sweet in the meadow,
The Piper plays in the woodland ways,
Through sunshine and in shadow.
The flow'rs of earth hear the voice of his mirth,
The bird in the tree-top swaying —
Anon shall his note through the green alleys float
Where lasses and lads go maying.
And where is the Piper now?
Ah, he hides in the topmost bough,
While young lovers muse in the mid-summer noon:
For sweet are the days with the magic of June;
And sweeter the nights with the stars and the moon;
And the spell of the Piper's playing.

Ah, soft and low shall the music flow
O'er the fields of autumn's glory;
Though reapers sing at the harvesting,
There's sorrow in their story.
Though gleams the gold on the woods and the wold,
We mourn the year's betraying;
For leaves lie dead on the paths that we tread:
The paths where we once went maying;
And brief was the summer's boon;
Cold winter is coming soon;
For flown are the swallows that built in the eaves;
And bitter the blast at the fall of the leaves;
But the husbandman sings as he garners his sheaves;
For he still hears the Piper playing.

Ah, cold and chill is the wind on the hill,
And cold are the snowdrifts lying;
When woods lie still 'neath the winter's will,
And summer's hopes are dying;
And birds have fled from the storm and the dread;
And the Piper has hushed his playing;
When lovers grown old shun the frost and the cold,
The lovers that once went maying —
Ah, where is the Piper then?
He is far from the haunts of men.
But weep not for summer that's buried and past,
Nor the wail of the voices that cry on the blast;
For the cuckoo shall waken the woodland at last;
And the Piper shall come again.

The Bookman

THE MARCH OF MAN

BY G. H.

Since it is Man's to sow where others reap,
And in this hour to reap where others sow,
Blown spume about a mighty ebb and flow,—
Soon spent, and soon re-gathered to the deep,—
I hold that like a soldier he should keep
His term of brief enlistment; pleased to go
Under life's flag against a common foe;
Content to serve, and hold advancement cheap.

Friends, since we halt within a little space,
We'll not complain; but, bravely as we can,
Press on, and bear the pack, and keep the pace.
Not without leaders goes this March of Man.
It journeys towards some goal, some resting-place.
Though now thick night lie prone on rear and van.

The Saturday Review

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED